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NDP calls for end to information-sharing policy in light of new info PAGES 12 & 14

While we wait for the zombies ...

The Walking Dead is on hiatus, so Metro helps you survive the lull by looking at which characters have the best chance to keep surviving PAGE 24

JUST SMILE AND NOD

PAUL SULLIVAN PONDERS WHETHER ANY MEANING CAN BE DREDGED FROM THE U.S. ROYAL VISIT PAGE 18

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City readies for storm surge

Locarno Beach. Sandbag berm goes up to guard homes against flooding

City crews have built a berm using 14,000 sandbags to protect against potential flooding caused by a combined king tide and storm surge that was expected to hit Vancouver's Locarno Beach on Wednesday morning. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

City crews sandbagged low-lying areas of Locarno Beach on Tuesday as residents braced for the threat of potential flooding due to a combined king tide and storm surge.

Brian Crowe, the city's director of waters, sewers and district energy, said crews used about 14,000 sandbags to build a 150-metre berm to help protect homes on Marine Drive from the unusually high tide.

"It's very strategically placed," Crowe told Metro. "It's the one area of the city that is at some risk of tidal flooding during exceptionally high tides during a storm surge."

A storm surge is a rising of sea levels caused by low atmospheric pressure, while a king tide is a seasonally high tide cycle that occurs sometime between the end of November and early January.

Crowe said a storm surge wouldn't typically be cause for concern. But when it is forecasted at a time when tides are already high, like during a king tide, he said the city is preparing for the worst.

In 2012, a king tide combined with a storm surge caused localized flooding near the Locarno Beach concession stand, near the area of Sasamat Street and northwest Marine Drive.

"Given how close it was in 2012, we want to be prudent and make sure we have a little more freeboard than we had then," said Crowe. "So we built this temporary berm."

Wednesday's high tide is expected to crest at 5.4 metres at about 8 a.m., said Crowe. During the December 2012 flood, he said the tide reached 5.5 metres.

The berm will remain in place until mid-January, he said, when king-tide season comes to an end.

Kitsilano resident Blair Mercer, who regularly cycles along Locarno Beach, said the high tide was "startlingly higher" Tuesday.

"The logs are way up higher than they should be," he said. "I won't say it's Armageddon-ish, but it portends of something."

Mercer applauded the city for taking pre-emptive measures to protect residents from flooding.

"All these houses — I don't care what their income level is — these are some of the most expensive houses in the city," he said. "They deserve to be protected, just like my little 500-square-foot hovel in Kits needs to be protected as well."

The city's berm building came as Environment Canada issued another warning for heavy rain, which was expected to arrive with the final wave of a powerful storm that has blasted B.C.'s south coast since Monday.

Heavy rain was expected to re-develop after midnight with the heaviest rainfall amounts of 50 millimetres expected near the North Shore Mountains, according to Environment Canada. THANDI FLETCHER AND EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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Struck and killed

ICBC issues warning after two pedestrians killed in Lower Mainland

ICBC warned pedestrians and drivers to be extremely careful on the roads after two pedestrians were struck and killed by cars on a stormy Monday night in the Lower Mainland.

A 53-year-old man died from his injuries after being hit by a car that lost control, went up on the curb and knocked down a lamppost in Coquitlam on Como Lake Avenue near Robinson Street just before 10 p.m.

Minutes later, a 75-year-old woman was fatally hit while crossing the road in Richmond on Westminster Highway near Gilbert.

It's a bad time of year for pedestrian safety due to the darkness and rainfall. An average of seven pedestrians are killed and 269 are injured in B.C. every December, according to ICBC.

Bad weather may have been a factor in both Monday crashes, according to RCMP, but that's where the similarities stop.

In Coquitlam, Mounties believe alcohol may have contributed to the crash. No charges have been laid yet.

In Richmond, the location at which the woman attempted to cross the street may have played into the accident.

Roads were closed for hours as investigators examined the separate scenes.

"This is a tragedy; our thoughts go out to the family of the victim," Richmond RCMP Cpl. Stephanie Ashton said in a statement.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Stephanie Moseley 'such a beautiful, kind spirit'

Fatally shot in California. Slain Vancouver-born actress asked dance teacher not to judge rapper husband

In this 2012 file photo, Vancouver-born actress Stephanie Moseley attends the Good Shepherd Center for Homeless Women & Children Holiday Toy Drive at Crocker Club in Los Angeles. ARNOLD TURNER/INVISION/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The first question Stephanie Moseley's former dance teacher asked the Vancouver-born actress when the cable TV star last dropped by her old studio was about her gleaming engagement ring.

"She said, 'If you look him up, don't judge him by his music,'" Rachel Poirier recalled Moseley quickly saying in defence of her then-fiancé, a Los Angeles rapper named Earl Hayes.

"I said, 'He's nice?' And she said, 'Yeah, he's nice. His music doesn't reflect his personality.'"

Three years later, Moseley, 30, and her estranged husband Hayes, 34, were both found fatally shot in what the L.A. Police Department have initially concluded was a murder-suicide.

The U.S. authorities said in a statement that patrol officers responded to a call for a possible shooting about 7:30 a.m. Monday at a California luxury apartment complex. Officers heard more shots being fired as they arrived. Tactical police found two bodies inside.

An early investigation revealed the pair were trying to reconcile in the days before Hayes apparently shot his wife and then turned the gun on himself, Det. Scott Masterson said on Tuesday.

Friends of Moseley from British Columbia are now joining the outpouring of dismay on social media about the death by domestic violence, which shows up as a general theme alongside other lyrics degrading women in several of Hayes' songs.

Poirier, who taught Moseley jazz and contemporary dance between the ages of 12 and 18 in Metro Vancouver, recalled the raw, unassuming talent of a young ballerina who grew into a friend with a successful dance and acting career.

Moseley was most recently featured in 12 episodes of the American VH1 drama series Hit the Floor, about a professional basketball dance squad, according to the entertainment database IMDB.com. Her website says that after moving to L.A. in 2004, she appeared in The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1, Mirror Mirror and Sparkle. She toured with the dance crews for both Britney Spears and Janet Jackson.

But she often returned to her roots in Vancouver, travelling home several times a year to visit her mother, her brother and his child in Burnaby, Poirier said.

Four days before her death, she posted a photo to her Twitter account depicting herself with eyes shrouded by an oversized cap baring the popular "Van City" streetwear logo.

"Comin from where I'm from #604," read the caption.

Her last tweet on Saturday simply says "flower girl."

Celebrities offered condolences over social media, including actress Ashley Tisdale who wrote: "I'll always remember dancing with you on #hellcats. Such a beautiful kind spirit. I'm praying for your family."

Pop superstar Rihanna posted a tribute photo of Moseley online as well. THE CANADIAN PRESS

1 NEWS

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School trustee on the defensive after ouster of longtime chair

Vancouver School Board. 'I did not align myself with the NPA': Green trustee defends school board shake-up

MATT KIELTYKA
matt.kieltyka@metronews.ca

Green Party school trustee Janet Fraser is defending her decision to shake up the Vancouver School Board after voting to oust incumbent Vision Vancouver chair Patti Bacchus in favour of an NPA chair.

Fraser, who holds the swing vote on a board evenly split between Vision and the NPA, chose NPA trustee Christopher Richardson — a former three-term park board commissioner — as chair over Bacchus on Monday night.

After six years of a Vision-dominated school board with Bacchus as chair, Fraser believes the district and provincial government only "entrenched their positions" during a confrontational period.

She hopes an NPA chair and a gentler touch can help convince the province to loosen its purse strings.

The district anticipates a funding shortfall of at least $23 million in its next budget.

"Funding is the critical issue," said Fraser. "I think the tone of the conversation (with the provincial government) will change."

"We have to go as friends and approach the minister to open a dialogue on various issues," Richardson said. "I appreciate the care (Fraser) took with her vote. We are pleased that from her point of view, her goals and aspirations could be better served with us."

Bacchus, the top vote-getter among trustees in November's election, said she wasn't surprised by Fraser's decision.

"We would not compromise on our advocacy position, so I could tell that was the way things would go. She's aligned herself with the NPA," said Bacchus. "I feel like a huge weight has been lifted, actually. We were holding back before; it does free me up to go after the thing that I feel our students need."

Fraser, however, denied she's allied with the more right-leaning NPA, which attacked Bacchus and Vision for not accepting corporate donations from Chevron during a heated election campaign.

"I did not align myself with the NPA, or any party," she said.

In a statement released on Tuesday, Fraser reiterated she will "vote independently based on Green values and my own conscience."

Former school board chair Patti Bacchus, with Mayor Gregor Robertson, proposes a free breakfast program for Vancouver schools during the 2014 civic election campaign. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

And while Richardson said the NPA is interested in "revenue development" programs to complement provincial funding, Fraser said she would continue to oppose any funding from Chevron.

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WorkSafeBC using new investigation tools

Sawmill explosions. New model more likely to result in prosecutions, says administrator

Workplace disasters that kill or injure employees in British Columbia are now more likely to result in criminal charges, with the introduction of a new investigation model that improves the chances of prosecutions, says a WorkSafeBC administrator.

Gord Macatee's report calling for an overhaul of inspection and investigation methods at WorkSafeBC stems from two explosions at provincial sawmills that killed four workers and injured 40 others.

His report details progress on safety measures at B.C. sawmills and more stringent investigation measures at workplace incidents.

"To me, that's the bottom line point of this, that if a prosecution is needed WorkSafe has the tools to do it and be successful," he said at a news conference. "Yes, I believe they are equipped where they need to use that tool to be successful."

The new investigation system has been in place since September.

Labour Minister Shirley Bond called for changes at WorkSafeBC last spring to restore public confidence in the worker protection agency's investigations when no charges were laid over the sawmill explosions just months apart in 2012 at Burns Lake and Prince George. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Smoke rises from the Babine Forest Products mill in Burns Lake, B.C. in Jan. 2012. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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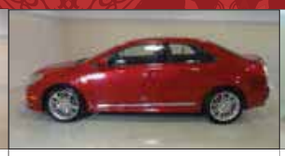

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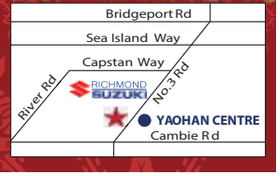

TransLink. Taxpayers federation eager to debate rumoured PST increase

A possible increase to the Provincial Sales Tax for Lower Mainland residents isn't sitting well with the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

According to a Globe and Mail report, the region's mayors favour increasing the PST by 0.5 per cent to fund the bulk of their share of a proposed $7.5 billion transit plan.

Any new source of revenue must be put to the region's voters next year in a referendum.

The mayors are expected to publicly explain how they intend to fund the plan and reveal the long-awaited referendum question (which must then be approved by the provincial government) when they meet on Thursday.

Jordan Bateman, B.C. director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, considered the possibilitry that the report is correct. He said the best thing about a possible regional increase to the PST would be that the details would finally be open for public debate.

"The first step is getting this out on the table," said Bateman. "I'm looking forward to Thursday. At least then we'll be able to debate it in public."

Bateman, an outspoken critic of TransLink and its fiscal management, said mayors need to take a hard look at the transit authority before ushering in new taxes.

The mayor's proposed 10-year plan includes a subway line along Broadway in Vancouver, light rapid transit lines in Surrey and expanded bus service throughout the region. MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Quoted

"I'm looking forward to Thursday, at least then we'll be able to debate it in public."

Jordan Bateman, B.C. director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation

VCC

Vancouver college saving piece of ESL program

Vancouver Community College will salvage a portion of its ESL programming next year, but not all of the English classes could be saved by the rules introduced by the province last week.

VCC will be able to save the jobs of 23 instructors, four support staff and provide classes for more than 600 students with the continuation of certain higher-level courses, the college announced Tuesday.

But that still leaves about 45 instructors and more than 1,600 students without a place to work or learn come Jan. 1.

Yet it's an improvement from the college's fears in May that its ESL program could be axed completely. The cuts were dulled by B.C.'s new rules that allow post-secondary institutions to charge tuition for ESL classes.

"We are committed to keeping as many ESL offerings as possible," VCC President Peter Nunoda said in a statement Tuesday. "At the same time we need to fund them sustainably. Since the government announcement last week, we've been working overtime to ensure we have solid ESL programming starting next January." EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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Facebook reunites B.C. woman with long-lost vacation photos

Picture perfect. After three years, scuba diver in Cuba discovered vacationer's camera and found her via her online profile

THANDI FLETCHER
thandi.fletcher@metronews.ca

When Emily D'Mello felt her camera slip out of her fingers into the ocean three years ago, she thought she had lost her vacation photos forever.

"My dad had bought me this drop-proof, waterproof camera because I tend to break things," she told Metro, adding with a laugh: "But I still ended up losing it."

The Surrey woman was vacationing with friends in Varadero, Cuba, in December 2011 when she was hit by a wave on the beach that knocked the camera from her hands.

"We looked for it for about 20 minutes but it was long gone," she said.

But last week, D'Mello received an early Christmas present when she checked her Facebook inbox.

There, she was stunned to see one of the long-lost photos along with a message from Ruben Urquiza, who identified himself as a scuba diver in Cuba who had found her camera in the ocean about a year ago.

"I just thought it was insane," she said with a laugh. "It's like one of those things that you see on Facebook and think, 'That's not real.'"

Although the camera was "pretty damaged," the memory card inside was preserved, and along with it D'Mello's vacation photos and videos.

Urquiza, who didn't immediately have Internet access, told her that he eventually managed to track her down online after finding identifying information on one of the images.

One of the long-lost vacation photos that was returned to Emily D'Mello of Surrey, who lost her camera underwater in Cuba three years ago. From left, Madisen Singer, Emily D'Mello and Hailey Olson. COURTESY EMILY D'MELLO

"I think I took a picture of my plane ticket, which had my name on it," she recalled.

On Tuesday, D'Mello said she was still in shock. She hopes to one day return to Cuba with her friends and thank Urquiza in person.

In the meantime, she said she plans on sending a Christmas present to show him her gratitude.

"It's so awesome," she said. "I don't care about the camera. It's just so nice that, almost three years later, I'm getting to see all these photos again."

Assault earns man drinking ban, two years in jail

The Granville strip
EMILY JACKSON/METRO FILE

A Vancouver man has received a two-year jail sentence and a one-year ban from drinking at night on the Granville Mall entertainment district, for a serious assault three years ago.

Anh Tuan Nguyen was convicted by a jury earlier this year for the aggravated assault of Christopher Ball, who was attacked at the Republic nightclub on Aug. 31, 2011.

Nguyen, then 30, struck Ball from behind and knocked him to the concrete floor, where he continued to strike blows even as Ball was unconscious.

Nguyen claimed he was provoked, because his girlfriend said Ball had groped her, but a review of the security video showed Ball may have simply jostled against her in the bar.

Nguyen filed a character reference from Vern Soo, who stated in his letter to the court that he was the owner of Quest Research Inc., where Nguyen had worked from February 2011 to March 2014. Soo said the firm would welcome Nguyen back with open arms when his case was resolved.

Police investigated and found the address for Quest didn't exist, and Soo was uncooperative when contacted.

The defence advised that Soo would appear in court to testify, but when he failed to show up, the defence passed on a website for Quest, which reflected a different Richmond address than the original. The website also reflected an affiliation with a Toronto company.

When the Crown contacted the owner of the Toronto company, Tanya Nguyen advised that she had no affiliation with Quest Research. The owner apparently knew Nguyen and said that he had called her to ask her to say she knew Soo and Quest Research if anyone checked up on him, the court was told.

She told the Crown she felt pressured and uncomfortable and refused to go along with the "subterfuge."

The defence asked for a suspended sentence, with two or three years probation, but the judge found the crime warranted a jail term of two years less a day.

The judge also ordered that the accused not to drink alcohol in the Granville entertainment district between 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. for one year after he is released from jail.

Defence lawyer Nathaniel Hartney objected to the Granville Street entertainment disctrict restriction on his client, suggesting it was "punitive," but the judge sided with Crown counsel Louise Krivel, who told the court,

"The entertainment district in Vancouver is notorious for problems. It's getting worse, and in light of this incident occurring in that area in a bar, in my respectful submission, that condition is completely appropriate in the circumstances."

NEAL HALL/FOR METRO

Law society reinstates lawyer who stole money almost 30 years ago

A Vancouver lawyer who quit practising law after he was caught stealing money almost 30 years ago has had his credentials to practise law reinstated.

It was the third time in the last 24 years that the former lawyer, Donald Duke Mainland, now 63, had applied for the reinstatement of his membership in the Law Society of British Columbia.

His first application for reinstatement was filed in 1990 and his second in 1994.

He applied again this year and the Law Society recently decided Mainland has "met the evidentiary burden of proving, on a balance of probabilities, that he is a person of good character."

The Law Society's credentials committee panel decided Mainland should be reinstated and permitted to practise law after taking some upgrading courses after such a long absence from the profession.

Mainland had been practising law since 1980 when in the mid 1980s he was caught stealing $8,950 in payments from clients of his law firm for fees and disbursements.

On 14 separate occasions between October 1985 and May 1986, he wrongfully retained the money for personal use.

Mainland's law firm discovered the theft, reported it to the law society and sued Mainland, who quit being a lawyer on June 18, 1986.

A law society hearing heard how Mainland was under considerable stress before his theft, as his young daughter was born prematurely and continued to suffer from serious and chronic medical conditions after her birth.

Mainland's marriage also broke down during that period and he entered into a separation agreement with his former wife, causing him to assume financial obligations far in excess of his means.

But he repaid all the money and settled the lawsuit. And, in the intervening years, he took a job as a paralegal in 1989 with a Vancouver law firm, now known as McMillan LLP, which continues to employ and support Mainland, who now is a senior trademark paralegal.

NEAL HALL/FOR METRO

Vancouver city councillors Tim Stevenson, Kerry Jang, Geoff Meggs and Adriane Carr at the inauguration ceremony on Monday. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Council may get pay raise

Fair pay. Mayor looking to review outdated rate

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Vancouver city councillors might be celebrating a pay raise in the new year.

On the first day of his third term, Mayor Gregor Robertson told reporters he called in a third party to assess the fairness of councillors' annual salaries of $67,994 plus an additional $2,830 per month served as deputy mayor. (The mayor makes $154,347.)

"Frankly, the compensation system is 20 years old … it used to be a part-time job and people were generally having second jobs," Robertson said after the inauguration ceremony on Monday.

"Nowadays with the advent of email and social media and the extraordinary need for more engagement in the neighbourhoods, it's an intense job for people to carry."

The compensation review was prompted by the mayor's decision to appoint two deputy mayors for a full year rather than placing the 10 councillors on a rotating deputy mayor schedule. That move could cost at least an extra $33,000 annually. The review will also look at councillors' compensation, including benefits.

"Right now, the councillors have bare minimum for benefits that are not comparable to what other city staff have," Robertson said. "I want to be sure we have a fair system and we get third party validation."

For cash-strapped residents raising their eyebrows at potential raises, Metro compared Vancouver councillors' salaries to their counterparts in other major Canadian cities.

They make slightly more than councillors in Surrey, which paid between $62,052 and $67,427 in 2013.

But they make substantially less than major cities across Canada. Calgary pays councillors the most with base salaries of $111,066.29. Councillors are paid $105,397 in Toronto, $96,323 in Edmonton, between $85,997 and $115,748 in Winnipeg (the higher pay included extra chair duties), and $93,999 in Ottawa.

Fraser Valley

Pilot hospitalized after Cessna crash

Emergency responders say the crash of a Cessna at an airport in the Fraser Valley has sent the pilot to hospital.

Fire Chief Don Jolley says the incident occurred mid-Tuesday when the small plane declared an emergency landing about 40 kilometres east of Vancouver and crashed on a taxi way at the airport. Its pilot was airlifted to hospital and was in stable condition. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prince George

Mountie stabbed during arrest

Police in Prince George say a Mountie was stabbed when two officers stopped three people on foot at about 11 p.m. Monday, and found one man had outstanding warrants for his arrest. Police say one of the Mounties was stabbed while the officers were taking the man into custody.

The Mounties say both the injured officer and the man were taken to hospital. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lawyer cited for misconduct after being named client's beneficiary

A B.C. lawyer has been cited for professional misconduct for being involved in preparing a will and naming himself as a beneficiary.

In a conduct citation, it is alleged that Penticton lawyer Charles Louis Albas in February 2009 "prepared or caused to be prepared a will for your client, FC, naming you as a beneficiary, contrary to Chapter 7, Rule 1 of the Professional Conduct Handbook."

The Law Society of B.C. says Albas's exhibited professional misconduct under Section 38(4) of the Legal Profession Act. The citation further alleges that Albas, in 2013, prepared or caused to be prepared a will for his client "naming your wife as a beneficiary and you as a contingent beneficiary."

No hearing date has been set for Albas, who has been practising since 1976. He is a partner in the firm Albas Wahl.

Rule 1 of the professional conduct handbook for lawyers in B.C. states: "A lawyer must not perform any legal services for a client if the lawyer has a direct or indirect financial interest in the subject matter of the legal services, or anyone, including a relative, partner, employer, employee, business associate or friend of the lawyer, (who) has a direct or indirect financial interest that would reasonably be expected to affect the lawyer's professional judgment." NEAL HALL/METRO

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Curb emissions?

Harper calls oil and gas regs 'crazy economic policy'

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has slammed the door on regulating Canada's oil and gas sector, calling it a "crazy economic policy" under current global oil prices.

His comments in the House of Commons come as international talks are underway in Lima, Peru, in an effort to reach a new post-2020 global agreement on curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

Harper was emphatic that Canada will not move unilaterally to curb fast-rising emissions from Alberta's oilsands.

"Frankly, Mr. Speaker, under the current circumstances of the oil and gas sector it would be crazy, it would be crazy economic policy to do unilateral penalties on that sector. We're clearly not going to do that," Harper told the House as Conservative MPs roared their approval.

"In fact, nobody in the world is regulating their oil and gas sector."

An Environment Canada briefing memo revealed last month by the Globe and Mail shows that the United States, in fact, placed what were called "significant" limits on its oil and gas sector in 2012.

"For oil and gas, recent air pollution regulations are expected to result in significant GHG reduction co-benefits, comparable to the reductions that would result from the approach being developed for this sector in Canada," states the June 2013 memo obtained by Greenpeace under an Access to Information request.

The Conservative government has been promising to regulate the oil and gas sector since 2007 as part of its sector-by-sector approach to curbing emissions, an approach the government calls a made-in-Canada plan.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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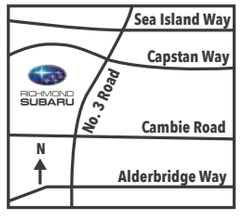

Medical pot users peeved

'Bad taste.'
Commercial medical marijuana producer's tongue-in-cheek media release no laughing matter to patients

TREVOR GREENWAY
Metro in Ottawa

Some medical marijuana patients are upset over a recent media release sent out by Tweed Inc. that they say makes light of their debilitating illnesses.

In the release, the commercial medical marijuana producer evokes holiday marketing, stating, "As people around the country prepare their homes for the holiday season, Tweed is decking the halls with a slightly different variety of greenery."

While the company says the release was meant to inject some humour into a serious matter, those who suffer from multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia and cancer aren't laughing.

"You are supposed to be a pharmacy to me and provide me my life-saving medication, and I'm not joking about it," said Ottawa resident Suzi Strand, who suffers from multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia and trigeminal neuralgia.

Other patients weighed in on Facebook, saying the release was in "bad taste," especially since some patients actually need marijuana to survive.

Some said they could understand it more if it was a pot shop promoting their product in Colorado where it is a legal recreational drug, but because it's strictly a medicine in Canada, patients saw it as an "unethical" way to promote the business.

"This spin shows how the MMPR system was designed for 'customers' not 'patients,'" wrote patient Heather Cox. "We are not looking for a cool gift — we are looking for safe and effective medical treatment that won't kill us."

According to Mark Zekulin, Tweed executive vice-president, the company has not heard any complaints from its customers, but said he was concerned if others had taken offence to the release.

"If every once in a while we try to use a slightly lighter entrance point into the conversation, it's always with the best intentions of trying to move the dialogue forward on education and research," he said.

Quoted

"I'm not in a wheelchair right now because of cannabis. I am not dead from accidental overdose today because of cannabis. There is nothing funny about it."

Suzi Strand, who suffers from multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia and trigeminal neuralgia

All aboard the HugTrain!

Arie Moyal poses for a photo at the VIA Rail station in Halifax on Tuesday during his HugTrain tour. The 34-year-old Montreal native is spreading the love with his sixth annual hug campaign, where he travels around North America for six weeks by train during Christmas time, hugging complete strangers. JEFF HARPER/METRO IN HALIFAX

Diplomatic warnings

Senate bill angers Vietnam

The Senate has passed an obscure private member's bill from a Conservative senator that has caused a diplomatic spat between Canada and Vietnam.

Its government has taken offence at the bill, which has sparked warnings that it could harm Canadian trade and investment opportunities.

The bill recognizes April 30 as a national day to commemorate the exodus of Vietnamese refugees and their acceptance in Canada after the 1975 fall of Saigon to North Vietnamese communist forces that ended the Vietnam War. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Remembrance Day

Court date set for man accused of pretending to be a soldier

A new court date has been set for a Quebec man accused of impersonating a soldier during last month's Remembrance Day ceremony at the National War Memorial.

A lawyer for Franck Gervais appeared in court on his behalf on Tuesday, where the case was put off until Jan. 6.

The 32-year-old Cantley, Que., resident was charged shortly after a CBC television interview. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Indonesia

Canadian teacher pleads case

A Canadian teacher facing allegations he sexually abused a kindergarten student at an international school in Indonesia has filed a letter with the court calling on the case against him to be dismissed.

Neil Bantleman of Burlington, Ont., filed the letter during a hearing Tuesday. The letter says he is innocent and the allegations against him are false.

Bantleman and teaching assistant Ferdinant Tjiong, who have been in custody since July, are being tried separately in closed-door sessions.

The letter says the indictment read against him last week left him "deeply saddened and appalled." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, talks to six-year-old cancer patient Diamond Marshall after she and Prince William arrived in Calgary on their Canada tour on July 7, 2011. CHARLIE RIEDEL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Diamond is no longer suffering'

Young cancer patient. Diamond Marshall shared famous hug with Duchess Kate in 2011

A young Alberta cancer patient, whose timid embrace of the Duchess of Cambridge captured hearts around the world, has died.

The family of nine-year-old Diamond Marshall said she died peacefully on Monday night.

"We are incredibly saddened, yet relieved, that Diamond is no longer suffering," her family said in a statement Tuesday.

"We are incredibly thankful for the time we had with Diamond and we will cherish the memories we made with her.

"In her fight against cancer, Diamond was a warrior, but she carried herself with the grace and dignity of a princess."

In July 2011, Diamond was battling Stage 4 undifferentiated sarcoma when she fulfilled her dream of meeting a "real princess."

She had written Kate a note from the hospital bed where the child watched the royal wedding earlier that year, and the Children's Wish Foundation went to work to make it happen.

The meeting came on the windswept tarmac of the Calgary airport at the conclusion of Kate and Prince William's Canadian tour.

Diamond, who had already lost her mother to cancer, wore bright pink shoes and a band with a pink flower around her bald head.

She gave a quick hug to Kate and then ran back to her family so quickly that she forgot to hand the bouquet of colourful flowers she was carrying. The duchess called her back, kneeled down and the two shared words.

The photos of the exchange became one of the lasting images of Kate's Canadian tour with Prince William — their first overseas visit as newlyweds.

"She was beautiful," an enthralled Diamond told reporters.

Diamond's dad, Lyall Marshall, would later say he believed the meeting helped his little girl fight the disease.

"That hug had a lot of meaning. We're very thankful for that meet and greet for her and the whole community rallying behind her," Marshall said.

"From a father's point of view, when you can say the whole world is rooting for you to get better, I mean, that's a lot." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Urine found in water cooler in Newfoundland hospital

Health officials in eastern Newfoundland say it appears someone poured urine into the tower of a hospital water cooler used by staff and patients.

The Eastern Health Authority says the incident occurred between Nov. 24 and Dec. 2 at an outpatient clinic at St. Clare's Mercy Hospital in St. John's.

David Diamond, president and CEO of Eastern Health, says a substance later confirmed to be urine was discovered in the water cooler on the ambulatory treatment unit on the third floor of the hospital on Dec. 3.

Eastern Health says the supplier of the water cooler confirmed the cooler has safeguards to ensure that liquid spilled into its tower does not contaminate the water bottle or dispenser.

Diamond says there is no health risk if people consumed water from the cooler.

Police have been notified and other water coolers have been tested and showed no signs of contamination. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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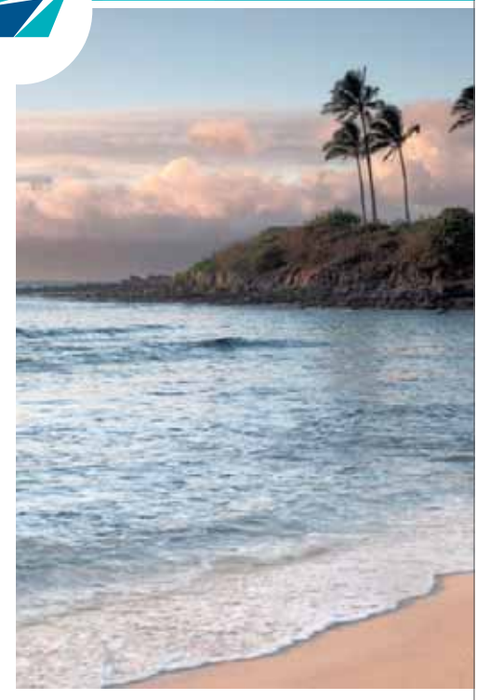

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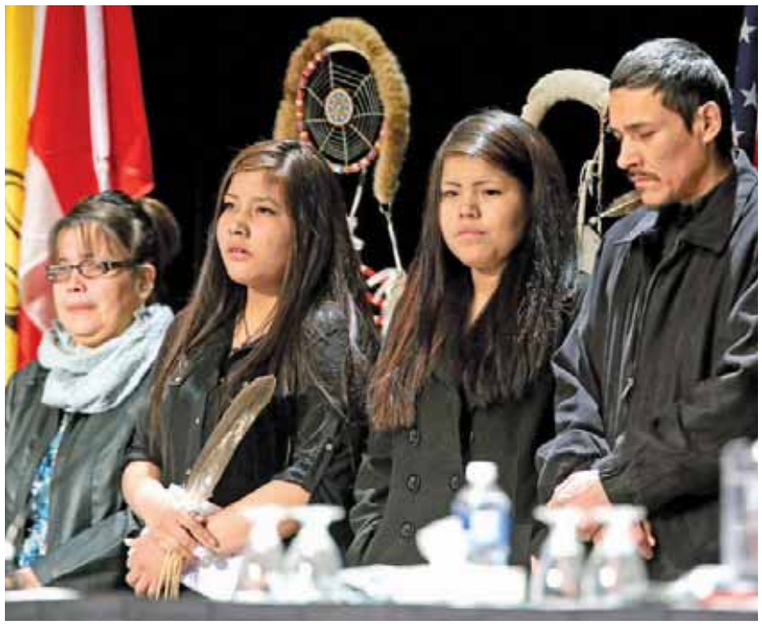

Teen assault survivor speaks at AFN election

With the support of her family, Rinelle Harper, second from left, stands after speaking at the Assembly of First Nations Election in Winnipeg on Tuesday. The Manitoba teenager, who was viciously assaulted and left for dead by the side of a river, has added her voice to the call for a national inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women. "I am Rinelle Harper and I am from the Garden Hill First Nation," the 16-year-old said tentatively. "I am here to talk about an end to violence against young (aboriginal) women." The assembly was honouring her with a drumming ceremony at the start of a three-day meeting in Winnipeg. TREVOR HAGAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

End sharing of info from torture: NDP

Canadian directives criticized. A new U.S. report says that torture does not yield valuable information in fight against terrorism

The official Opposition pointed to a new U.S. report that discredits torture in renewing a call for the Conservative government to rescind its information-sharing policy.

The long-anticipated U.S. Senate intelligence committee report concludes the Central Intelligence Agency's use of simulated drowning, confinement in small spaces, sleep deprivation and threats of violence against family members did not yield valuable information in the post-9/11 fight against terrorism.

In the House of Commons, New Democrat MP Peter Julian said Tuesday the conclusion to be drawn from the American report is simple: Torture doesn't work. However, Julian pointed out, the Canadian government has issued directives to several police and security agencies allowing them to use and share information derived using brutal methods.

Maher Arar

Maher Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian, was detained in New York in 2002 and sent overseas by U.S. authorities, ending up in a filthy Damascus prison. Under torture, he gave false confessions about involvement with al-Qaida.

The instructions give five federal agencies — the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the RCMP, the military, Canada Border Services and the Communications Security Establishment — the go-ahead to exchange information with a foreign partner even when doing so may give rise to a substantial risk of torture.

The Canadian policy has drawn criticism from human rights advocates and opposition MPs who say it effectively condones torture.

The federal framework says when there is a "substantial risk" that sending information to — or soliciting information from — a foreign agency would result in torture, the responsible deputy minister or agency head should be consulted.

In deciding what to do, the agency head is supposed to consider factors such as the threat to national security and the nature and imminence of the threat; the status of Canada's relationship with — and the human rights record of — the foreign agency; and the rationale for believing that sharing the information would lead to torture. THE CANADIAN PRESS

For more on the report from the U.S. Senate intelligence committee, see page 14.

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Murder trial. Accused was 'psychotic': Psychiatrist

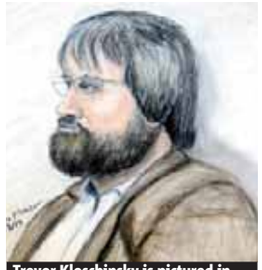
A psychiatrist says a dog breeder was "actively psychotic" and probably didn't realize he was doing anything wrong when he killed a bylaw officer who was investigating an animal complaint.

Trevor Kloschinsky is charged with first-degree murder in the 2012 death of Rod Lazenby, a retired RCMP officer who was responsible for enforcing bylaws in the Municipal District of Foothills near Calgary.

Kloschinsky's lawyer has said she plans to argue her client was not criminally responsible and forensic psychiatrist Dr. Sergio Santana took the witness stand at the trial Tuesday.

"He displayed a delusional system that he was being persecuted by a number of agencies and it had been going on for some time," Santana testified. "He developed the idea that his victim planned to destroy him financially … that Lazenby was a corrupt police officer."

Lazenby died after going to Kloschinsky's property near Priddis on Aug. 10, 2012. Kloschinsky eked out a living selling blue heeler dogs he raised there.



Trevor Kloschinsky is pictured in this artist's sketch. JANICE FLETCHER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Court heard an autopsy found Lazenby was strangled and had 56 abrasions, contusions and lacerations to the face, head, neck, body and back. He also suffered numerous internal injuries.

Kloschinsky, 49, has admitted causing the death of Lazenby, 62. He acknowledged dropping the officer off, handcuffed and unconscious, at a southeast Calgary police station, where he told officers he had apprehended a "dog thief."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lawsuit. Veterans charter a 'Liberal policy': Harper

The new veterans charter, a marquee deal defended and championed by Stephen Harper's Conservatives since 2006, suddenly became a "Liberal policy" Tuesday as the government weathered more demands for Julian Fantino's resignation.

The veterans affairs minister, who was on his feet constantly during the previous day's question period, rose infrequently on Tuesday in the face of an unrelenting barrage of NDP and Liberal attacks.

Instead, he was defended by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who tried to put some political distance between his government and a class-action lawsuit in B.C. that argues the charter is unconstitutional and discriminatory against modern veterans.

The charter was conceived and passed by Paul Martin's Liberals with the support of all parties. It was put into force by Harper's Conservatives as one of their first acts after forming a minority government in 2006.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Resettling refugees

UN agency urges Canada to increase commitment to Syrian refugees

A global call for help resettling more than 100,000 Syrian refugees over the next two years must be answered in part by Canada, the United Nations refugee agency representative in Ottawa says.

The latest appeal by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees represents an opportunity, Furio De Angelis said.

The UNHCR made a special pitch at meetings in Geneva on Tuesday for countries to help resettle more than 100,000 refugees from the Syrian civil war by 2016.

Though 25 countries made pledges to open more spaces, Canada was not among them.

"We will make announcements about further commitments at a future date," said Kevin Menard, a spokesman for Immigration Minister Chris Alexander.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

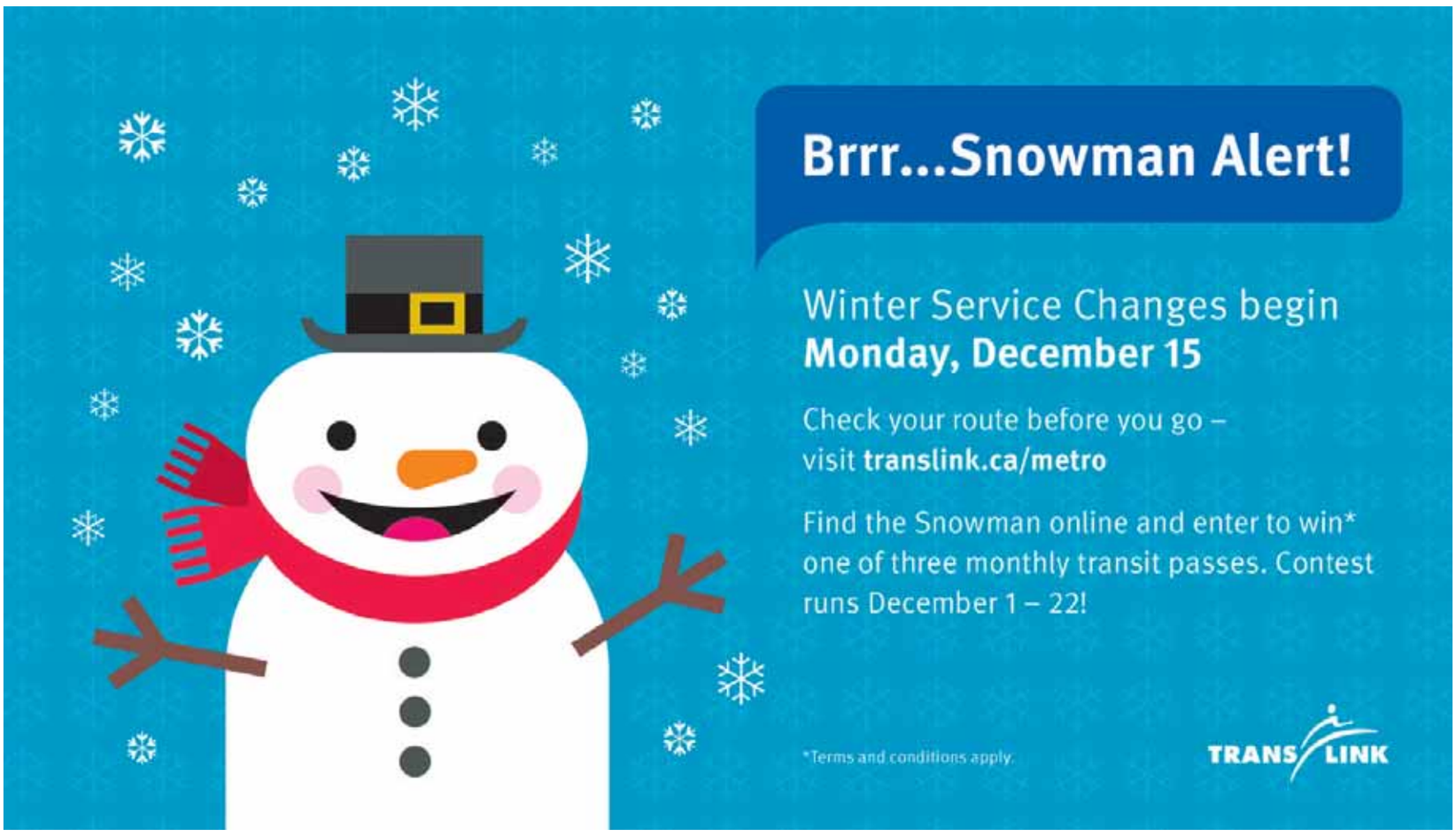
No additional troops

Canada not part of expanded Iraq mission: Officials

The federal government says Canada is not part of a group of nations sending an additional 1,500 troops to Iraq to serve as advisers to local forces in their fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

A senior U.S. commander announced this week that unnamed allied nations working alongside the United States had agreed to send the additional personnel to speed training of Iraqi forces. But a representative for Defence Minister Rob Nicholson said Wednesday that Canada was not part of this effort and that, for now, the 69 Canadian soldiers currently working in Iraq would be the extent of Canada's contribution to assist ground forces.

Military commanders have said the air campaign is only a stopgap until ground forces can be trained and sent into action to reclaim territory from the ISIL. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE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U.S. brutalized suspects for no gain in security: Torture report

Misleading. Senate committee says CIA deceived U.S. about methods' effectiveness

The United States brutalized scores of terror suspects with interrogation tactics that turned secret Central Intelligence Agency prisons into chambers of suffering and did nothing to make America safer after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, Senate investigators concluded Tuesday.

The Senate Intelligence Committee's torture report, years in the making, accused the CIA of misleading its political masters about what it was doing with its "black site" captives and deceiving the nation about the effectiveness of its techniques. The report was the first public accounting of tactics employed after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and it described far harsher actions than had been widely known.

Tactics included confinement to small boxes, weeks of sleep deprivation, simulated drowning, slapping and slamming, and threats to kill, harm or sexually abuse families of the captives.

But the "enhanced interrogation techniques" didn't produce the results that really mattered, the report asserts in its most controversial conclusion. It cites CIA cables, emails and interview transcripts to rebut the central justification for torture — that it thwarted terror plots and saved American lives.

In a statement, CIA director John Brennan said the agency made mistakes and has learned from them. But he also asserted the coercive techniques "did produce intelligence that helped thwart attack plans, capture terrorists and save lives."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Senate Intelligence Committee Chair Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., is surrounded by reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday as she leaves the Senate chamber after releasing a report on the CIA's harsh interrogation techniques at secret overseas facilities. J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"I will continue to use my authority as president to make sure we never resort to those methods again."

U.S. President Barack Obama

"We gave up much in the expectation that torture would make us safer. Too much."

Sen. John McCain, who, unlike most of his fellow Republicans, welcomed the report and endorsed its findings

Revealed

Six major findings from the newly released summary:

- Interrogation techniques used on terror detainees were ineffective.
- Prison conditions and interrogations were more brutal than the CIA acknowledged.
- Much of the information the CIA provided to the media was inaccurate.
- Two psychologists who had no experience in interrogations or counterterrorism invented the program that was used.
- The CIA actively impeded or avoided congressional oversight.
- CIA officials often gave inaccurate information to the Bush administration.

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Brooklyn. Calvin Peters was shot dead after stabbing a student

Stabbing victim Levi Rosenblat
CHABAD.ORG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An emotionally disturbed man stabbed an Israeli student in the head at an international Jewish organization in Brooklyn, N.Y., early Tuesday, then was shot and killed by a police officer after lunging at him with a knife, authorities said.

Calvin Peters, 49, can be seen on video waving a knife in the Chabad-Lubavitch headquarters after police say he stabbed Levi Rosenblat in the temple, according to Chabad-Lubavitch spokesman Rabbi Motti Seligson. Rosenblat was listed in stable condition.

A clip posted online shows Peters with a knife in hand, surrounded by officers with drawn weapons and students wearing traditional Orthodox clothing.

Some of them appear to be trying to defuse the situation, urging Peters to calm down. He eventually puts the knife down and steps away, but picks it up again as the officer approaches, apparently in an attempt to arrest him. Officers then yell at him to drop the knife as Peters moves around unpredictably. A gunshot is heard. Police say Peters lunged with the knife at the officer and was fatally shot by an officer.

Peters had a documented history of mental illness and had been arrested 19 times since 1982, police said. Detectives don't suspect terrorism.

Attorney Jeffrey A. St. Clair said that Peters had a history of bipolar disorder.

"Calvin Peters was a loving and devoted father," said St. Clair. "And the family is quite frankly shocked and disappointed." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shelter from Hagupit

Typhoon Hagupit evacuees walk home with their sheets and pillows after spending two nights in an evacuation centre at Quezon city, Philippines, on Tuesday. A storm that began as a frighteningly powerful typhoon started to blow away from the Philippines Tuesday, after leaving at least 21 people dead and forcing more than a million into shelters. BULLIT MARQUEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Report on Gaza strikes

Israel accused of war crimes

Amnesty International says Israel apparently committed war crimes when it flattened four landmark buildings during its military operation in the Gaza Strip last summer.

In a report, the London-based rights group said Tuesday that the airstrikes amounted to "the deliberate targeting of civilian objects." It said targeting civilians is a "serious violation" of the international rules of war.

During 50 days of fighting, Israel carried out hundreds of airstrikes. In the closing days of the war, it flattened a shopping mall in the southern town of Rafah and three highrise buildings in Gaza City. Israel warned residents to flee ahead of time, but Amnesty says dozens of people were wounded there and hundreds left homeless. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem tensions

Poll: Palestinians support attacks

An overwhelming majority of Palestinians support a recent spate of attacks on Israelis amid heightened tensions over the most sensitive holy site in Jerusalem, according to a poll released Tuesday.

The poll found that more than half support an uprising against Israel and that Hamas would win elections if held today. Pollster Khalil Shikaki said results reflected anger over Israeli statements about the holy site as well as a loss of hope following the collapse of peace talks and Israel's recent war in Gaza.

Prominent members of Israel's government have demanded that Jews be allowed to pray at the site of the Al Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock. Many fear this is a pretext for a gradual takeover — a claim Israel denies. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Over three years later

Al-Qaida French hostage freed

A Frenchman held for over three years by al-Qaida's North African branch was freed Tuesday, days after two men implicated in his abduction were reportedly let out of a prison in Mali.

Negotiations by Niger, Mali and France led to freedom for Serge Lazarevic, 51, who the French president said is in "relatively good health." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Says no to IRA links

Sinead O'Connor joins Sinn Fein

Sinead O'Connor, long a critic of church and state in Ireland, says she's joining the Irish nationalist Sinn Fein party and wants its leaders to step aside for younger voices free of IRA connections.

The 48-year-old singer says Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, who oversaw the outlawed Irish Republican Army, should retire. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rape accusations

Uber executive questioned by Indian police

Indian police questioned an Uber executive Tuesday about the company's background checks after one of its New Delhi drivers was accused of rape.

The accuser is a 26-year-old woman who hired an Uber ride home from a dinner engagement Friday night. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Acquitted of murder

Judge to rule on appeal against Pistorius decision

A South African judge will decide Wednesday on whether to allow prosecutors to appeal the verdict and sentence in the case against Oscar Pistorius, who was acquitted of the murder of his girlfriend.

Prosecutor Gerrie Nel says the judge erred in her interpretation of the law. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yousafzai and Satyrathi warm up streets of Oslo

Joint-Nobel Peace prize winners Malala Yousafzai, left, and Kailash Satyarthi in Oslo, Norway, Tuesday. The Nobel Peace Prize will be shared between the two in Oslo on Wednesday. MATT DUNHAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nobel Peace Prize. Co-winners highlight the need to educate children, overcome national differences

Nobel Peace Prize winners Malala Yousafzai from Pakistan and Kailash Satyarthi of India on Tuesday stressed the importance of uniting people across borders and religions by educating children and freeing them from poverty.

The 17-year-old Malala, who was shot in the head two years ago in Pakistan for insisting that girls have as much right to education as boys, says it is "not only the right but the duty of children" to be educated.

Sitting alongside Malala, the youngest Nobel winner ever, the 60-year-old Satyarthi told their news conference that even if a single child is denied education "we cannot say we are enlightened."

The Nobel laureates, who split the $1.1-million award, were cited for working to protect children from slavery, extremism and child labour at great risk to their own lives. The visit by Malala and Satyarthi has drawn hundreds of people into the freezing streets of Oslo hoping to get a glimpse of the laureates.

Martin Slotnes, a Norwegian living in Australia who was visiting the city with his wife and children, said it was the first time he had taken an interest in the peace prize.

"Her story moves me," he said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"Countries do have borders. It doesn't mean that you should hate each other."

Malala Yousafzai, the youngest Nobel laureate about India-Pakistan relations

Truce raises hopes of longer peace in Ukraine

Government troops and Russian-backed separatists largely suspended hostilities in Ukraine on Tuesday, raising hopes of a peaceful settlement in the seven-month conflict that's taken thousands of lives.

The lull in fighting followed a proposal by Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko for a "day of silence" as a bid to revive a largely ignored ceasefire deal reached in September.

The war has left more than 4,300 people dead, displaced hundreds of thousands and exhausted a nation struggling to stave off economic collapse.

As Ukraine enters winter, when temperatures can drop below freezing for days if not weeks on end, combat fatigue is showing on both sides.

Separatist rebel leaders have supported the truce, which appeared to be holding around the main rebel-held cities of Donetsk and Luhansk.

Despite a noticeable decrease in shelling, the military press office said Tuesday evening there had been 13 attacks on army positions and residential areas in government-controlled settlements.

"Ukrainian troops, behaving with honour and restraint, didn't open fire in return," according to a statement.

Earlier, a military spokesman said attacks had been mounted in areas around Debaltseve, a town 70 kilometres east of Donetsk that has been the scene of some of the heaviest shelling as separatists attempt to squeeze out government forces ensconced there.

Rebel authorities said they recorded no rocket attacks by government troops but that they were engaged with small-arms fire. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ottawa tackles price gap for goods sold in Canada, U.S.

Price Transparency Act. Legislation meant to name and shame those manufacturers that sell goods for more north of border

The federal government has announced new legislation that is meant to tackle the persistent price gap between goods in the U.S. and Canada.

The Price Transparency Act, tabled in Ottawa Tuesday, is designed to "name and shame" manufacturers and distributors that demand higher prices for goods in Canada, Industry Minister James Moore said.

"This legislation will not set or regulate prices in Canada," he told reporters at a news conference held at a Toys "R" Us store in Etobicoke.

The announcement follows through on a commitment the government made in its 2014 budget, following a Senate investigation into the reasons for the pricing gap.

The legislation would give the federal Competition Commissioner the power to collect evidence on so-called cross-border price gouging and publicly report its findings.

The commissioner would get tools to investigate cases of alleged price discrimination and the power to compel the production of evidence to expose discriminatory pricing practices.

"We think this is an effective tool" that will result in "immediate downward pressure on prices," Moore said. "We believe those who are engaging in this practice … will abandon it."

While there are some legitimate cost differences between selling U.S. and Canadian goods, studies have shown that Canadians routinely pay between 10 and 25 per cent more than U.S. shoppers for television sets, cars and tires.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Market Minute

DOLLAR 87.41¢ (+0.32¢)

TSX 14, 195.73 (+51.56)

OIL $63.82 US (+0.77¢)

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VOICES

THEY EVEN SMILE CAREFULLY

While trying to dredge any meaning or purpose of yet another British royal visit to America may seem like a tedious exercise in earnestness, as British Monarchy 2.0, Will and Kate deserve credit for saving the brand. Wait, what was the brand again?

PAUL SULLIVAN
readers@metronews.ca

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, a.k.a. Will and Kate, have just finished wandering amiably, if somewhat aimlessly, around Manhattan, leading us all once again to wonder why.

I mean what was the point? To hang out with Jay-Z and Beyoncé at courtside to watch LeBron James? To make a speech about trafficking in endangered animal parts? To lay yet another wreath at the 9/11 memorial? To see how Kate handles being five months pregnant (with her usual poise and aplomb)?

Trying to dredge any meaning or purpose of yet another British royal visit to America may seem like a tedious exercise in earnestness. They're a nice enough young couple, which in itself is worth applauding when you consider other members of the family, including the Duke's own brother, Sir Harry Hijinks, or his dad, the Prince of Embarrassing Things.

So rather than leave Americans with a bad taste in their mouths from the last royal visit — Harry's assault on Vegas that failed to stay in Vegas — why not send that nice young couple? Everyone smiles and bows and then they go home for more of the same: Deferential adoration.

As British Monarchy 2.0, Will and Kate deserve credit for saving the brand — which is great until we start asking, "So what's the brand, again?" The bad old days made sense: Back when Charles and Diana were poisoning each other's PR and a Texas financier was sucking the Duchess of York's toes, the monarchy was collapsing like the corrupt spent force we all assumed it had become.

METRO PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

Bobbleheads of state

As Paul McCartney famously wrote: 'Her Majesty's a pretty nice girl but she doesn't have a lot to say.' Which goes double for Will and Kate ...

But now that the artlessly dignified couple has pulled its ashes out of the fire, the monarchy has become a force again. Three-quarters of Her Majesty's subjects believe that it will survive at least until little Prince George is old enough to be king. Not so long ago, when Diana was getting riding lessons from the cavalry, the House of Windsor was under self-inflicted siege.

Too bad this post-modern Restoration takes us back to the safe, stuffy and utterly pointless exercise it had become under Queen E II. As Paul McCartney famously wrote: "Her Majesty's a pretty nice girl but she doesn't have a lot to say." Which goes double for Will and Kate, who even smile carefully. Is that what the British people want for their annual royal subsidy of 36 million pounds? Closer to home, is that what Canadians want from our bobbleheads of state?

Poor Will is reduced to sticking up for a few other endangered animals, because he's constitutionally barred from saying anything about the real issues: Home-grown terrorism, unemployment, immigration — you know, the actual news headlines arranged around the celebrity photos of Kate's latest thrilling frock.

Ironic, isn't it?

The more civil the behaviour, the less relevant the Royal.

Maybe it's time to let Harry and Aunt Sarah out of the bag again and send them somewhere interesting, like Cannes or Rio.

It may be short, but it could be sweet.

More than just books: Why libraries empower us all

MIKE DONACHIE
Metro in Toronto

Take a look at our libraries, and you can read us like a book. Mention public services, and the mind leaps to health care or police, or maybe garbage collection, transit or road repairs. Mention a library, and many people will think of a dusty building filled with endless shelves of battered tomes. They'd be wrong, at least nowadays.

But library services need to be at the forefront of modern public services, sweeping away that dusty old image, and here's why. Libraries are far more important than many people think. They unlock our potential to learn, and modern times have seen them branch out to far more than just books.

In Toronto, for example, public library staff report that 72 per cent of citizens visited a library within the past year, with individual "uses" — and that's in every imaginable way — hitting almost 97 million in 2013. Interestingly, the city's engagement with paper books has been dropping steadily. In the decade to 2013, use of collections in-person at libraries dropped by 27.3 per cent. But the use of electronic collections, including e-books, doubled in 2011, then 2012 and again in 2013. They now represent 10 per cent of the circulation of books in Toronto's libraries.

Sweeping away that old dusty image

Mention a library, and many people will think of a dusty building filled with endless shelves of battered tomes. They'd be wrong, at least nowadays.

The trend is not limited to big cities. In neighbourhoods across Canada, libraries are feeding the appetite for information in the information age.

A library is still a way to find information, but you can also make connections, attend events, hear music, access the Internet and more. There are educational programs, art exhibits, reading clubs, talks and social gatherings. You can find 3D printers, toys and havens for newcomers, new mothers and the elderly. Canada spends more than $1 billion a year on libraries from public funds, at different levels of government, and has done so every year since 2008-09, according to Statistics Canada, and that shows the degree to which we value these institutions.

Calgary's building a beautiful new central library, at a cost of $245 million, with a four-storey central atrium and a huge skylight to shed light on the more than half a million books the place will hold when it's completed in 2018. Halifax's new central library, costing more than $50 million, opens next week, and the excitement level is high.

Investment in library services is a measure of a society, and Canada's investment is in the future. With newcomers pouring in every year — in 2013, this country welcomed more than 270,000 new permanent residents alone — the need to learn is greater than ever before.

When the people of Canada improve themselves, Canada improves. So, as municipalities get ready to set their budgets for the coming year, they need to be kind to their libraries.

It's an investment in us all.

metro

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Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Jessica Alba ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Sony hack reveals how celebs give aliases a bad name

The Sony hack is the gift that keeps on giving for fans of entertainment industry schadenfreude. While we certainly don't condone employees having their Social Security Numbers released or families threatened via email, there has been a certain degree of pleasure in seeing how they really feel about Adam Sandler movies. And the latest bit of info may be the best.

A document has surfaced featuring contact information used during filming, including the fake names celebrities go by to remain undetected. And oh my, these are fantastic.

Some sound like dime-store detectives — ahem, Tom Hanks — while some like porn stars — looking at you, Tobey Maguire.

Some, like Ice Cube, just use their real-life names, which is boring. And Taye Diggs apparently just wants people to think he's someone related to Taye Diggs.

But the absolute best? Jessica Alba, who apparently goes by the code name Cash Money.

Here's the list:

- Tom Hanks: Harry Lauder and Johnny Madrid
- Sarah Michelle Gellar: Neely O'Hara
- Tobey Maguire: Neil Deep
- Natalie Portman: Lauren Brown
- Clive Owen: Robert Fenton
- Rob Schneider: Nazzo Good
- Taye Diggs: Scott Diggs
- Jude Law: Mr. Perry
- Daniel Craig: Olwen Williams
- Ice Cube: Darius Stone and O'Shea Jackson
- Debra Messing: Ava Harper
- Jessica Alba: Cash Money

Ariana's naughty aside a nice surprise for Sheeran

Apparently while everyone else was watching models strut the runway during the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, Ariana Grande was making Ed Sheeran crack up with some risqué humour. "Can I tell you why I was laughing?" Sheeran explains in an interview with Elvis Duran. "Basically, there were all these big inflatable bouncy black balls that are bouncing around in the crowd on the finale bit. Ariana Grande comes and stands up next to me and just looks at me and goes, 'I love big black balls.' In my head I was like, 'If she knows what that means, then I love her, and if she doesn't know what that means, it's even better.'"

I'm going to go out on a limb here and guess that she does in fact know what that means.

Grumpy Cat purrs down a cool $100M? Surly not!

Tell the Internet it can calm down, because that report in the Express about online sensation Grumpy Cat pulling in $100 million? Let's just file that under "wildly inaccurate."

Proud owner of Grumpy Cat, Tabatha Bundesen, tells the paper, "I was able to quit my job as a waitress within days of her first appearance on social media, and the phone simply hasn't stopped ringing since," which is either hyperbole or a terrifying way to live. But Bundesen tells the Huffington Post that while Grumpy Cat has pulled in plenty of cash thanks to appearances, endorsements and a new Lifetime Christmas movie, the Express is way off with its $100 million claim.

But Lil Bub? That guy's totally a billionaire.

Grumpy Cat

SCENE

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Late night. Obama sends himself up on Colbert

President Barack Obama talks with Stephen Colbert of The Colbert Report.
SUSAN WALSH/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

His daughters mock his big ears, he leaves his socks on the floor and sitting behind Stephen Colbert's desk, he said, gives him a greater sense of power.

When President Barack Obama was not seriously defending his economic record, his executive actions on immigration and his delayed decision on the Keystone XL oil pipeline Monday on The Colbert Report, he was playfully confiding that the trappings of the presidency really don't go to his head.

"When I go home, Michelle, Malia and Sasha give me a hard time," he told host Stephen Colbert. "There are no trumpets, and they tease me mercilessly."

It was Obama's third appearance on the show, his second as president, and marked the beginning of the final two weeks for the Comedy Central program. Colbert will take over for David Letterman on CBS' Late Show next year.

Obama kicked off the show sitting in for Colbert to perform a regular feature of the program called The Word wherein Colbert's rants are accompanied by snarky messages to the audience.

So when Obama, as Colbert, declared that there are aspects of Obamacare that people from both parties actually like, the text aside to the audience read: "Everything but the Obama."

Later, Colbert accused Obama of exceeding his authority on immigration. "When did you decide to burn the Constitution and become emperor?" he asked.

Obama dropped the comedy and replied: "Actually, Steve, everything that we have done is scrupulously within the law and has been done by previous Democratic and Republican presidents."

As he wrapped up, Colbert had one last question: "Barack Obama — great president or the greatest president?"

"I'm going to let someone else decide — not you, but someone who knows what they're talking about," the president replied.

Colbert countered: "Stephen Colbert — great pundit or the greatest pundit?"

Obama didn't miss a beat: "The greatest pundit."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rom-com celebrates Toronto

Streaming. Alex Pugsley gave his hometown as much of a starring role in his debut film Dirty Singles as the ensemble cast

STEVE GOW
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Actors Alex Paxton-Bessley and Paul Campbell in Alex Pugsley's romantic comedy Dirty Singles. CONTRIBUTED

Alex Pugsley almost tried to cast Rachel McAdams in his very first movie — except the young director changed his mind.

"I have a friend that's a yoga instructor of Rachel McAdams and I thought, should I pretend to be a yoga student and pass her the script?" laughed the filmmaker while discussing his new drama Dirty Singles.

"Then I thought it might be weird — not only because it's weird to approach her at a yoga class, but if there's one movie star and everyone else is sort of unknown, it might make the feng shui of the movie wonky."

Wise move. Instead, Dirty Singles is a well-balanced movie that's reminiscent of such multi-layered rom-coms as Love Actually and Crazy Stupid Love. In the ensemble relationship drama (available Dec. 15 on iTunes and VOD), a group of late-20-something couples struggle with their collective friendship after one pair's partnership falls apart.

"The cast is one of the strongest features of the movie," said Pugsley of an ensemble he whittled down from about 250 auditions. "When you're making a romantic comedy, you want the actors to feel like they're really a couple because the audience will figure it out. The audience will sense immediately if people have chemistry and they would actually be married to each other."

As convincing as Pugsley intended his actors' performances to be, the TV writer-turned-director also insisted on making Toronto part of the movie — if not for the sake of simplicity (he shot it all within a 200-metre radius of one neighbourhood, after all), then for the love of his hometown.

"Toronto is used so often as a stand-in for New York or London," said Pugsley. "I thought let's see the CN Tower or the Gardiner Expressway or streetcars. I think Toronto's amazing, so let's celebrate it — I wish more things did."

Dirty Singles by the numbers

Alex Pugsley admits his debut feature was "a big logistical challenge." Here's a look at Dirty Singles by the numbers:

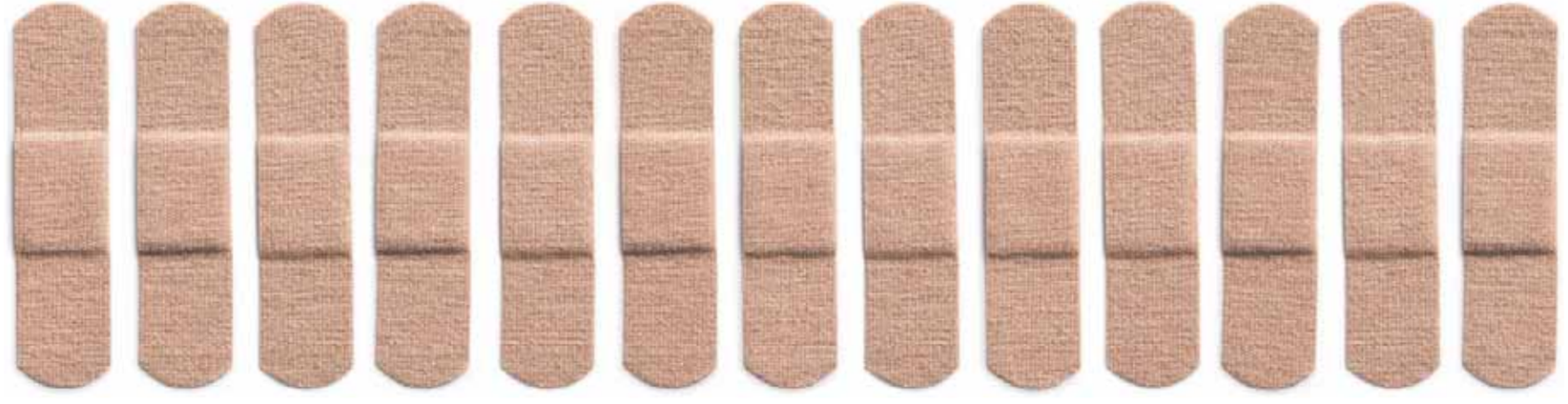
250
Auditions for the movie.

30
Filming locations within a 200-metre radius.

21
Speaking parts in the film.

14
Days to shoot the movie.

9
Hours of daylight in December, when he filmed the movie.



Skulduggery, greed and sex: This Marco Polo is no game

Streaming. Think GOT with martial arts as Netflix series follows 13th-century explorer on the Silk Road to the court of Kublai Kahn

RICHARD CROUSE
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Olivia Cheng, left, and Joan Chen star in a 10-part Netflix series about Marco Polo. PHIL BRAY FOR NETFLIX

A year ago, Edmonton-born actress Olivia Cheng says she was familiar with Marco Polo as an Italian traveller "and I obviously knew about the swimming pool game, but that is about it."

Now, as the star of the new Netflix adventure series about Polo's early years, she's captivated by the story.

"When I saw the first script I said, 'Where's the second script? Then the third, fourth, fifth…'"

The handsome 10-episode season follows Polo's travels on the Silk Road to the court of Mongolian emperor Kublai Kahn.

It's a study of political skulduggery, greed and sexual politics, 13th-century style.

Imagine Game of Thrones with martial arts and an international cast headed by Rick The Fast and the Furious Yune and Joan Chen and you get the idea.

"All of my stuff was shot in studio in Malaysia," says Cheng, who spent five months on location.

"I've never had an opportunity to immerse myself so fully in a role and be able to focus like that. You're almost in a cocoon or a bubble, where you are constantly thinking about the story, constantly thinking about the nuances. I would often walk from set to set watching different scenes. I just got to immerse myself in the world of Marco Polo and experience a cultural adventure that I'm really grateful for."

The actress, who also plays Linda Park on Arrow and The Flash, says the show's elaborately tailored wardrobe helped her find the character of Mei Lin, a royal concubine and martial arts expert.

"When you have the beautiful costumes, you are able to step into a world and suddenly it informs you," she says.

"That is a huge gift as an actor because a costume can make you move a certain way; you are in your body in a certain way because of the weight of the material. For me, I felt like it made me so much more graceful. You have to be, in order not to trip in those costumes."

But just as interesting as watching the world of Marco Polo being built was a scene where she tries to pull it all apart.

"I can't tell you how amazing it was to get to film White Moon — this epic fight scene with 200 extras all dressed in white," she says.

"I felt so grateful because I saw all the effort it took to create this world for me to run in and try and destroy it."

TV. Leoni head over heels for Madam Secretary role

Tea Leoni CONTRIBUTED

It took surprisingly little for Tea Leoni to take on a lead role in a network television show — which she did for the freshman political drama Madam Secretary — just word from her kids that they'd rather not have her around the house that much.

"I'd been struggling for a while with this idea of committing to something that could be — potentially, we hope — a long endeavour," she remembers. "I was walking across the street with my son, who's 12, and I said, 'I'm thinking about doing this thing. If I do this, I could be very busy for a while.' He looks up at me and is like, 'Mom, it's totally fine.' I was like, 'Really?' And he says, 'Yeah. We were really getting sick of you anyway.' So it was great to have that blessing, honestly."

On the series, Leoni plays U.S. Secretary of State Elizabeth McCord, and she admits that a lot of people have jumped to a pretty obvious conclusion when it comes to her model for the character — former Secretary of State and presumptive presidential nominee Hillary Clinton. But she insists they're completely off-base.

"I've certainly been asked if I met with Hillary. And obviously it's the blonde hair, right off the bat. I swore, I said, 'No, it's Kissinger,' but whatever," Leoni jokes. "The truth is the first place in my mind that I went was not toward a particular political figure or in particular a female Secretary of State, since we've had three. I thought more about my grandmother — who founded the U.S. fund for UNICEF, who was the volunteer president for almost 30 years and raised five kids and 27 grandchildren — and what it was for her to be travelling around the world and coming home and being a mother. I think about my friends who are up to it, who are working mothers and what that's about."

Leoni, for her part, finds Secretary McCord incredibly easy to relate to. "I certainly do when I think about the heels that I'm wearing and the hours that I keep and my children at home. Those three things are very much the same," she says.

"The shoes, God damn it, can we just talk about the shoes? I tell you, that's the hardest part of my job. I am in high heels for sometimes 17 hours in a day. My feet are killing me. I don't know how we do it. I can't even imagine how John Kerry's handling it."

NED EHRBAR/METRO IN HOLLYWOOD

Quoted

"I've certainly been asked if I met with Hillary. And obviously it's the blonde hair, right off the bat. I swore, I said, 'No, it's Kissinger,' but whatever."

Tea Leoni, jokes about assumptions her Madam Secretary is based on Hillary Clinton

Surviving the Walking Dead hiatus

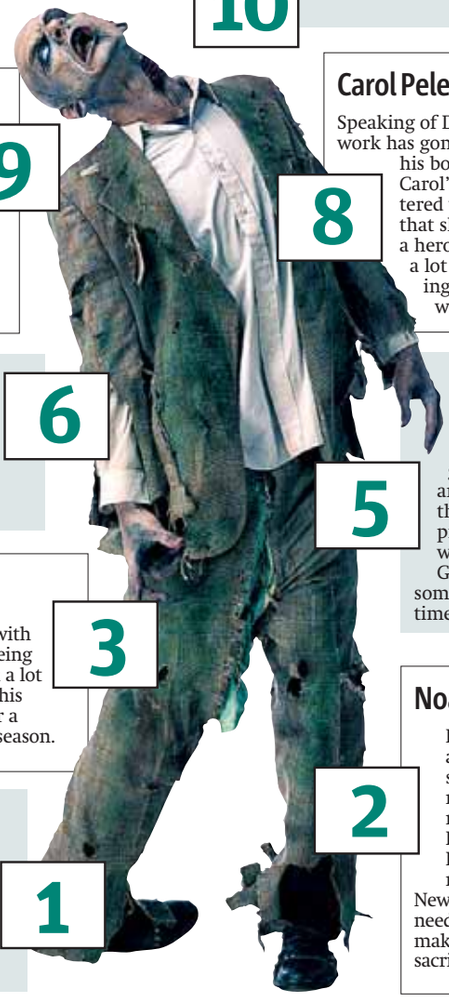
(Note: Spoiler alert!) We're halfway through the fifth season of The Walking Dead, and the body count has been relatively low for the show, considering its history and the size of its cast.

Sure, we just lost Beth in rather dramatic fashion, plus Bob earlier in the season and a whole bunch of Terminus cannibals. But come on, this is the zombie apocalypse we're talking about here.

While we wait for the series' return in February, let's look at who has the best chance of making it to Season 6. We're ranking the characters on a survival scale of one to 10, with one being practically already a Walker and 10 being safe and sound.

NED EHRBAR/METRO IN HOLLYWOOD

SURVIVAL CHANCES



10

Baby Judith

What kind of a monster are you?

Michonne

As much of a fan favourite as Daryl, and she's taken too much of a backseat so far this season to kill off. Surely they wouldn't do that to us.

Daryl Dixon

As much as Rick is the face of the show, Daryl is the heart — at least as far as diehard fans are concerned. If anyone's going to make it all the way through this show alive, it's him.

9

Rick Grimes

Yeah, he's not going anywhere any time soon, not since they reunited him with his baby in Season 5, but they haven't given him much screen time at all with her or Carl so far. Unless the second half of the season is Grimes-heavy, in which case maybe they're building up to a shocking finale.

Carl Grimes

Oh, come on, the boy? He's only just starting to come into his own, and his development as a hard-talking apocalypse survivor still has a lot of places to go. Still, if they really wanted to send Rick off the deep end…

8

Carol Peletier

Speaking of Daryl, so much work has gone into developing his boon companion Carol's character from battered wife to basically Rambo that she might have seemed to be headed for a heroic but tragic death. But then they put a lot of effort into saving her life and rescuing her in the last few episodes, so that would just be mean at this point.

Tyreese

The group needs its big, violence-averse teddy bear, and Rick needs a capable babysitter. While Tyreese is totally the type to take one for the team, he's probably still got some time before he does.

6

Tara Chambler

That sense of humour might just be what helps keep her around, as nobody else is making with the inappropriate wisecracks this group so sorely needs.

5

Glenn Rhee

The voice of reason and resident good guy can only stick around so long, and the cast is getting pretty crowded. Still, we'd expect to see Glenn and Maggie get some more quality screen time before one of them bites it.

Maggie Greene

We give her about the same odds as Glenn, but if it's any consolation it will probably only be one or the other.

3

Sasha

She's really, really upset about Bob still — with good reason — and she's been giving a lot of steely-eyed stares lately. We could see her going down in a blaze of heroic glory once the show comes back.

Abraham Ford

He's been through the ringer with the revelation about Eugene being a big old liar, and we've gotten a lot of back story for him already this year, so he could be primed for a splashy exit by the end of the season.

2

Noah

He's pretty new, and he's still got some mistakes to make up for — nobody touches Daryl's crossbow! Does that mean a messy exit in the New Year? He certainly needs some time to make good on Beth's sacrifice for him.

Rosita Espinoza

She's gotten a fair amount of screen time in the first half of the season, and she's kind of occupying the same emotional and character space as a few others, so consider her back to have a big target on it going forward.

Eugene Porter

He's got to make up for that huge lie he got everyone to buy into, or at least he's a great source of tension within the group. He's a prime candidate.

1

Father Gabriel

We're honestly surprised he's made it this far. Expect this character's one note to be played to its logical conclusion before the finale.

Is our public healthcare system ailing?

Demand for health care is increasing — but so are the cuts

CONTRIBUTED

Canada has one of the most envied public healthcare systems in the world, but access is increasingly a problem. Too many Canadians are waiting too long for the healthcare services and treatments they need. The growing demands of the aging population will only increase the strain on the system.

For starters, there aren't enough nurses and other healthcare professionals to meet that growing demand. Canada is also facing a shortage of 86,000 long-term care beds for seniors over the next 10 years. As for the population at large, four million Canadians don't even have a family doctor.

Part of the problem is that there is a shortage of healthcare professionals, creating a need for a national strategy to recruit, train and retain more doctors and other healthcare professionals in the public system. But instead of investing in health care, the federal government is cutting more than $36 billion in funding. That will leave even more people without access to the healthcare services they need.

The labour movement has always supported a strong public healthcare system, and is working to convince the government to adopt a national health human resources strategy. It has also partnered with community groups at the local, provincial and national level to call for a reverse to the billions of dollars in cuts, and to convince the federal government to work with provinces and territories on a new Health accord that will expand coverage and improve access for all Canadians.

Through collective bargaining, the labour movement has won prescription drug coverage and other healthcare benefits for millions of Canadian workers and their families. But today, there are still more than three million Canadians who can't afford the medication they need.

Nobody should have to choose between filling prescriptions and paying their bills. That's why the labour movement is lobbying for a national universal pharmacare program. It's estimated that such a program would save public health care up to $11 billion a year through bulk purchasing and reduced administration costs.

Canadians also need better access to mental health services. One in five Canadians experience a mental health issue or illness each year — while only one in three Canadians who need mental health services actually receives them.

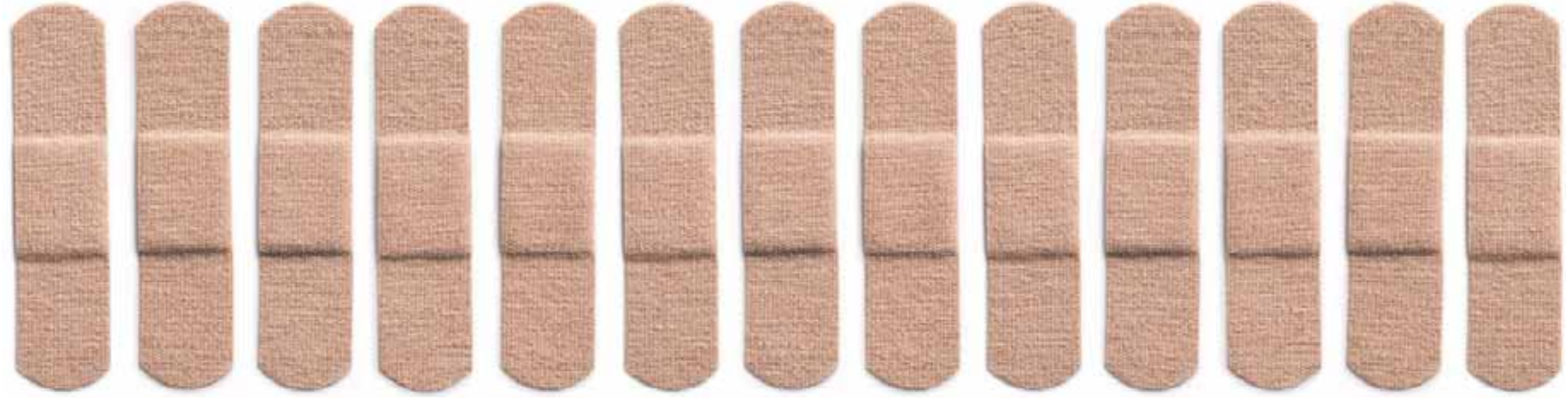
Canadians have learned enough from SARS and H1N1 to know that it's crucial for our healthcare system to be ready for any crisis. Healthcare workers are on the frontline and are often the first to see where the gaps are when it comes to fighting infectious diseases and epidemics. Recently, nurses turned to their union to help them sound the alarm about the need for better systems, protective equipment and training to prepare for a potential Ebola outbreak in Canada.

Everyone in Canada should have equal access to health care, when and where they need it. Access shouldn't depend on where someone lives or how much money they make. The labour movement understands that having a strong public healthcare system benefits all Canadians, as staying healthy means people are able to get to work, raise a family and contribute more to their communities.

To learn more about how the labour movement is helping to improve and expand health care for all Canadians, go to **fairnessworks.ca**.

THE MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY FOR CANADA

Countless people with mental health issues aren't getting the care they need and end up in emergency rooms looking for help. That's why the labour movement worked with the Mental Health Commission of Canada to help create the first national mental health strategy. For more information, visit **strategy.mentalhealthcommission.ca**.



TV. Star of Hawaii Five-0 talks about his not-too-shabby shooting location

Chi McBride, right, as Capt. Lou Grover on Hawaii Five-0. CONTRIBUTED

Chi McBride will be the first to admit that his hit series, Hawaii Five-0 has pretty much taken over Oahu.

"Literally you can't swing a dead cat on the island without hitting our production somewhere," he says. "People literally look for us at the airport — because we shoot at the airport. Hawaii's quite beautiful in and of itself. They certainly don't need Hawaii Five-0 to have a booming and successful business for tourism. But it don't hurt!"

And he wouldn't have it any other way, dead cats or none.

"I do love Hawaii, I love my place there," McBride says. "And I do love to play golf, which I do a lot in Hawaii. We're going to have Michelle Wei on the show (this season) and she's going to take a couple of us out to play golf. I'm personally looking forward to that because (series star) Alex (O'Laughlin) is a terrible golfer, and he's going to have to play. So one thing I know I'm going to say to him is, 'I bet you don't want to do your own stunts now, do you?'"

McBride has been having fun playing Capt. Lou Grover on the hit series, currently in its fifth season, though he keeps looking for some connection to the same character from the original 1970s version.

"I heard that this character was on the original show, and the only one I saw was the guy who had one line on a megaphone. There was somebody standing on a ledge, and Grover picked up a megaphone and said, 'Hold it right there!' And that's the only thing he ever did in the whole series," he says. "And every week I've been looking in the script for me with a megaphone saying, 'Hold it right there!' but it never happens, so I guess that's just a carrot that they're holding in front of me to stay on the show."

NED EHRBAR/METRO IN HOLLYWOOD

Series CPR

McBride has some pretty strong feelings about bringing old properties back to life, despite the success of his own show.

- "You can't remake The Three Stooges. Nobody should ever try to remake The Honeymooners. There's several of these vehicles like this that are iconic that you could get lucky with or you could fail, like, on an epic level," he says, possibly unaware that his network, CBS, is launching a new The Odd Couple next year.

Eat like a Euro of Hollywood

TV. Reality star Bleona Qereti gives us a sweet treat for the holidays, and explains that AMA dress that turned heads last month

NED EHRBAR
Metro in Hollywood

The stars of the reality series Euros of Hollywood know how to create TV drama, but they have other talents.

Austrian Fawni is a pop star and painter, Albanian Bleona Qereti is a singer and recent red-carpet attention-grabber, and Denmark native Jannik Olander runs a successful jewelry company with a busy storefront on Melrose.

But taking on a reality series, as it turns out, is a full-time job in itself. "We would film for 12 hours straight, and then I would be going to the studio to record all night," Qereti tells Metro of balancing filming the series with her music career. "I wasn't sleeping much."

And some of them have multiple passions, as it turns out, like aspiring actor Massimo Dobrovic. Aside from also being a model and choreographer, Dobrovic is also a pretty impressive chef. He even prepared a special eight-course dinner for Metro to show off his Italian cuisine skills — and let us take his dessert recipe home with us so you can enjoy it, too.

Bleona Qereti works her curves on the red carpet. GETTY

Bleona explains her shocking AMA look

Euros of Hollywood co-star Bleona Qereti knows how to get people's attention, as she proved while attending the American Music Awards in an incredibly revealing see-through dress.

- "The dress is a haute couture dress designed by Shahla Dorriz with a body made from mom and dad," the Albanian singer says, according to Bravo. "The minute I saw it, I knew that was the one. The dress was sewn on my body since 9 a.m. (the day before). Thank God I took a shower before (the show), because it would have been the dirtiest red carpet I have ever done."
- As for comparisons to Rose McGowan, who wore a similarly see-through number to the MTV Video Music Awards back in the '90s? "I have no idea who she is," Qereti insists. "I just saw her face in the press next to mine for the first time in my life. True story."

A light and delicious dessert. ISTOCK

Massimo's Italian Tiramisu

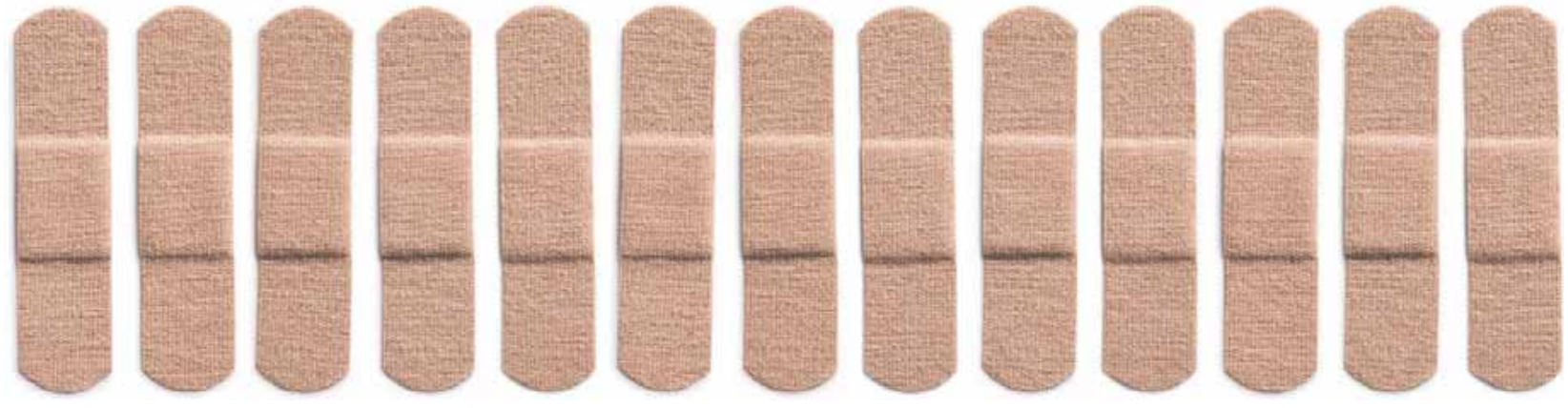
* 14 oz. Savoiadri biscotti
* Two 8 oz. containers of mascarpone
- 1 1/3 cup of espresso
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 4 eggs, separated
- Pinch of salt
- Bitter cocoa for dusting

1. Beat egg yolks and sugar in a large bowl until pale and thick. Add the mascarpone and mix gently until very stiff.

2. Beat egg whites and a pinch of salt in a separate bowl until soft peaks form. Gently fold them into the mascarpone mixture.

3. Prepare the espresso, pour it into a shallow dish and let it cool down. Dip the Savoiardi quickly into the coffee one at a time and arrange them side by side, in a serving dish. Cover the biscuits with the mascarpone mixture. Use all the Savoiardi and the cream to form more layers.

4. Top with a layer of marscarpone mixture. Dust the top with cocoa. Refrigerate, covered, for at least 4 hours before serving.

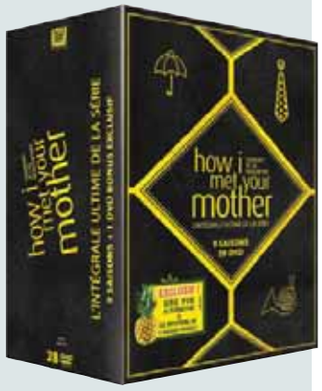


On March 31, the world finally learned how things ended for the protagonists of How I Met Your Mother, including Ted Mosby, the long-winded narrator who spent nine seasons telling his children their origin story. Here is a selection of gifts for friends of Ted, Robin, Marshall, Lily and Barney

AFP

5 gifts for How I Met Your Mother fans

The Complete Series DVD Boxed Set



For the first time, all nine seasons featuring the five friends are available on DVD in a single boxed set. Among the bonus features are an alternative ending to the controversial one revealed in March, as well as a deleted scene that explains the famous pineapple incident, a mystery that remained unsolved while the show was on TV.

The set is available from Amazon with a list price of $179.98.

Blue French horn

Another essential reference among HIMYM fans, this musical instrument is the quintessential symbol of Ted and Robin's relationship. In a demonstration of his love for her, Ted steals the horn, which they noticed in a restaurant during their first date.

A tree ornament presented in a wooden box and available from Cooltvprops.com for $24.95 pays homage to this romantic gesture. Other versions of the instrument are available on Amazon.

Ducky Tie

This is one gift that is totally "legen ... wait for it... dary!" A key reference among fans of the show, this is the tie that Barney Stinson had to wear for an entire year after losing a bet with Lily and Marshall.

CBS sells a replica through its online store for $24.95.

Yellow umbrella

Another of the sitcom's recurring items, the famous yellow umbrella was constantly passed back and forth between Ted Mosby and the future mother of his children. Each appearance of the accessory tried the patience of viewers, who were eager to finally see the mysterious character's face.

A version with the show's logo, also available through the CBS online store, is priced at $18.50.

Let's Go to the Mall tote

Though the uninitiated may see only an invitation to go shopping, HIMYM fans will recognize a nod to Robin. During her formative years in Canada, the journalist had a brief stint as a teen pop star with her hit Let's Go to the Mall, an endless source of amusement for her four friends.

The tote is available at Cafepress.com for $28.50

New TV series

Patricia Arquette CONTRIBUTED

New CSI spin-off coming in March

CSI: Cyber, headlined by Patricia Arquette, will arrive on CBS on March 4, the network announced. The third spinoff on the hit crime series CSI will focus on investigations at the FBI's cybercrime division. Arquette and James Van Der Beek co-star, and Luke Perry features in the first episodes in a potentially recurring role. AFP

Superman's grandfather gets his own series

Syfy is developing Krypton, a series about the home planet of the famous DC superhero. The project that first surfaced last October in a report from Bleeding-cool.com, is indeed underway, Syfy has confirmed. The network also validated the earlier report that Man of Steel screenwriter David S. Goyer is involved as an executive producer. As indicated by its name, the series is set on Superman's home planet, where he was born as Kal-El. The protagonist is Superman's grandfather, who attempts to restore the honour of the House of El and to bring hope and equality to Krypton. AFP

Holiday classic a misfit from the start

Rudolph. Created on a tight budget in 1964, the stop-motion animated special has suffered from a lack of respect for 50 years

Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer airs Dec. 14 and 22 at 7 p.m. on CBC and Dec. 20 at 6 p.m. on YTV. CONTRIBUTED

"You'll go down in history," wrote Johnny Marks about Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.

It's been 75 years since the composer's song became an instant hit, and 50 years since NBC first aired one of the most beloved Christmas specials of all time.

The hour-long special returns Dec. 14 and 22 at 7 p.m. on CBC, and Dec. 20 on YTV as part of its month-long Merry 6-mas package of nightly holiday specials airing at 6 p.m. ET.

The history of the Rankin-Bass stop-motion animated special has had its ups and downs. It reads more like a mystery novel than a holiday classic.

Take the Canadians who supplied the voices of the show's main characters. Paul Soles spoke for Hermey the Elf, the North Pole helper with the kiss-curl who really wanted to be a dentist. Soles, now 84, puts his involvement in the special down to "blind luck."

The Toronto native who has gone on to a long acting career was already established with a troupe of CBC Radio performers by 1964. His cousin was Bernard (Bunny) Cowan, who, among other things, had been the announcer on Front Page Challenge. Cowan had assembled a voice cast for two previous animated shows produced by Jules Bass and Arthur Rankin Jr. — The New Adventures of Pinocchio and Tales of The Wizard of Oz.

Those shows, according to Rick Goldschmidt, author of The Enchanted World of Rankin-Bass, had been done on the cheap. The New York-based producers were down to taking loans from friends to bankroll their series, and chose Toronto's Crawley Films to crank out 130 short episodes of Wizard. Using Canadian voice actors was a cost-cutting move.

"We were good, but we also worked cheap," says Soles. "This business of residuals was new to our union, which was not quite as strong as SAG or others in the States."

The fate of the voice stars, however, is better than what happened to the puppets. Rudolph, like Pinocchio, was animated in Japan. The bendable puppets, designed in America by Antony Peters, were photographed a few frames at a time to create the animation.

To promote the special, a full cast set of puppets was shipped from Japan to America and, according to Goldschmidt, put on display at Christmastime at NBC Studios in Manhattan.

Rankin and others placed little value in the puppets, so they were never stored properly. Some were even pitched as the company moved throughout the years.

Rankin's secretary took a cast set home one Christmas and gave them to nieces and nephews, who played with them under the tree. After Christmas, the puppets were stored in an attic. The heat was too much for the Abominable Snow Monster and others. Several puppets melted together and had to be trashed.

Two survived: Santa and Rudolph. Cleaned up and put on eBay, they fetched $10,000.

Goldschmidt put the new owner in touch with Screen Novelties, which fully restored the dolls. Rudolph's original nose was missing and had been clumsily replaced with a wad of red clay. Santa was missing half his moustache and the white pompom off his hat. Today, they are valued at about $200,000 — more than double the original budget for the entire special.

Finally, there's the fate of the special itself. Rudolph, says Goldschmidt, has been "taking it on the nose" for years by CBS. Although the network is making a big deal out of the 50th anniversary, the version it airs is a mess, he says. His pleas to the current owners at Dreamworks to restore Rudolph have fallen on deaf ears.

The original version wasn't perfect, he admits. He likes the seldom-seen original end credits, but the names of both Billie Mae Richards and Antony Peters were misspelled.

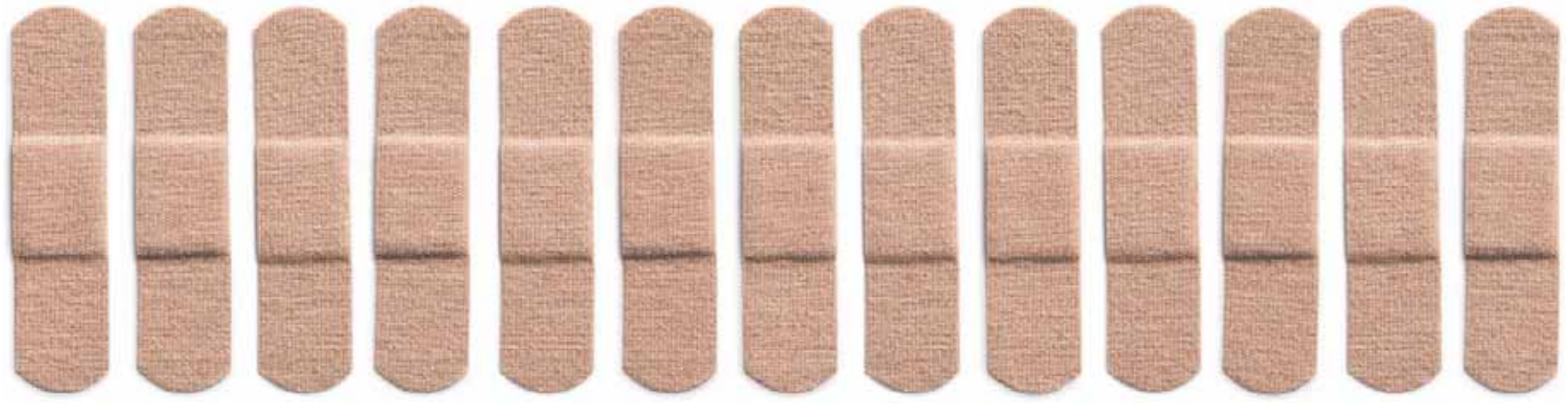
Soles suggests Rudolph's imperfections may ultimately be part of its lasting appeal. After all, he asks, aren't we all from the Island of Misfit Toys?

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian connection

Canadians supplied the voices for the 1964 special. THE CANADIAN PRESS

The 1964 show features the voices of Canadian actors Paul Soles (as Hermey the Elf), Billie Mae Richards (Rudolph), Stan Francis (Santa), Larry Mann (Yukon Cornelius), Carl Banas (elf foreman), Janis Orenstein, Paul Kligman, Peg Dixon, Corrie Conley and Alfie Scopp. But because the idea of residuals was still new to their union, the actors never saw a nickel from the special after the second repeat in 1966 — despite the fact Rudolph has never fallen off the annual Christmas TV schedule. Burl Ives, on the other hand — brought in at the last minute to appease NBC and sponsor General Electric — had a much better deal. The American singer and his estate, continue to cash Rudolph cheques each year.



You've a good voice, Sally Dryer

Christmas. Five decades later, the voice of Charlie Brown's best female friend recalls her childhood experience with the iconic franchise

A Charlie Brown Christmas returns Dec. 16 on ABC and Dec. 23 on YTV. CONTRIBUTED

A Charlie Brown Christmas has spoken to the child in all of us for five decades. Imagine what it would have been like to have been a child involved in the making of this special.

One such lucky girl was Sally Dryer. At eight years of age, Dryer was among the children cast to voice several of the beloved Peanuts comic strip characters.

"I was just at the right place at the right time," says Dryer, now 58 and living in Arizona, N.M.

She was cast as the voice of Violet in A Charlie Brown Christmas, but starting with the next special, It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown and through a few more in the '60s, she voiced Charlie Brown's football-yanking nemesis, Lucy Van Pelt.

Then her voice changed, and as Dryer says, "I was a has-been at 11!"

Cartoonist Charles Schulz, who died in 2000 at 77, was very protective of his creation. For 50 years, he drew every panel of every comic strip.

In 1965, when producer Lee Mendelson finally wore him down about doing an animated TV special, Schulz agreed only if certain conditions were met. One was that actual children — and not the adult voice actors usually hired on animated programming — be used to give voice to Charlie Brown, Linus, Lucy, Schroeder and the rest of the Peanuts gang.

Mendelson spread the word among his staff that he was looking for kids who might fit the parts. Dryer got an audition because her big sister happened to be Mendelson's babysitter and — at the time of the casting call — a production assistant at his company.

Nobody had any idea that the special would still be charming TV audiences 50 years later — least of all the young actors.

Dryer remembers the experience as "a day off school, a hamburger and a recording in San Francisco." One or two of the kids weren't old enough to read that well, and director Bill Melendez would feed them the dialogue line by line. Kathy Steinberg, who did the voice of Charlie Brown's little sister Sally, relied so much on Melendez's coaching she started mimicking his Latino accent.

Dryer remembers this was still a problem on the Great Pumpkin special. "He would say, 'tricks or treats' instead of 'trick or treat.' I still get questions about that — 'Why do you say, 'tricks or treats?" and I say, 'Because that's what we were told to say.'"

Dryer remembers playing with Peter Robbins (Charlie Brown), Chris Shea (Linus) and the other kids while waiting their turn at the mic.

"It was like playing hooky for a day," says Dryer. "We were a group of wild children, playing on the elevators and running up and down stairs and they'd take us one by one into the soundproof room and work with us, while the other kids crazily ran around and played." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Modern but still magical

The Schulz family is thrilled new generations continue to relate to Charlie Brown and Snoopy.

- A new CGI-animated Peanuts movie, approved by the family, will premiere in 2015. "You see so many other products that come and go and they're major hits and they have their Christmas specials and then they're gone," says Jill Schulz, Charles' daughter.
- The reason A Charlie Brown Christmas endures, she thinks, is because these characters seem so human. There's a sense that what happens to the Peanuts gang "happens to all of us."

Simpsons. D'oh come all ye fans and behold these gifts

After a quarter century on the air, Homer, Marge, Bart and Lisa need no introduction, and the world has seen plenty of The Simpsons merchandise since 1989. As the comedy celebrates its 25th anniversary, there is a particularly abundant selection of gifts for fans this holiday season. AFP

Season 17 DVD boxed set

Bart's nemesis Sideshow Bob graces the cover of this boxed set. First aired in 2005 and 2006, the 17th season includes 22 episodes on the famous yellow family. Among the special features are previously unreleased scenes, bonus episodes and audio commentary. The boxed set has a list price of $49.98 on DVD and $59.99 on Blu-ray.

The Simpsons' House Lego Construction Set

For its 25th anniversary, the show teamed with Lego to replicate the Simpsons' house down to the last detail, including the family's brown couch and pink car. The removable roof invites kids and grown-ups to peek inside. Priced at $199.99 and available at the Lego website, the construction set comes with mini-figures of Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa, Maggie and Ned Flanders. These mini-figures are also available separately as part of a collection of 16 of Springfield's most beloved residents ($3.99 each).

Mr. Potato Head Homer Simpson Figure

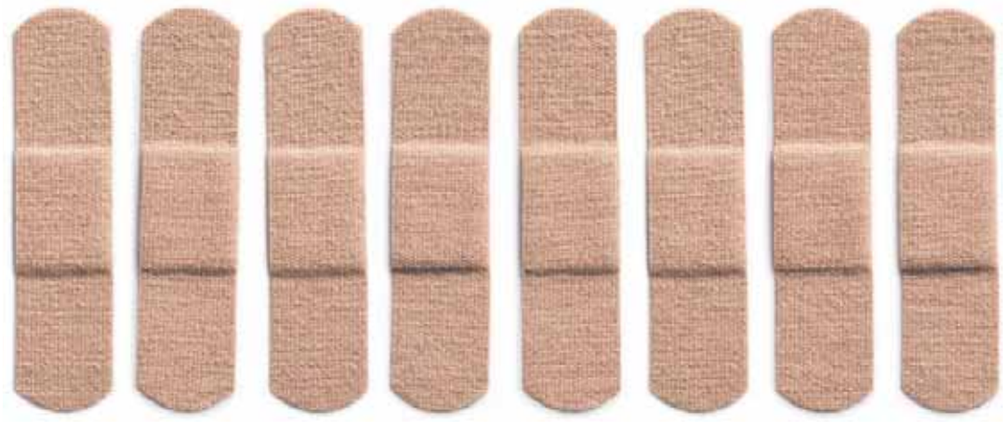
The show's humour may not be appropriate for all ages, but kids aged two and up can still appreciate Homer through this special edition Mr. Potato Head. The six-inch figure comes with mix-and-match components, including a doughnut with sprinkles. Available for $19.99 on Amazon.

Eleven Paris X The Simpsons T-shirts

Known for its irreverent "moustache" T-shirts featuring celebrities, the French clothing brand has launched a new collection honouring Matt Groening's beloved characters. Bart, Homer, Chief Wiggum, Krusty the Clown and other residents of Springfield are featured on these original T-shirts, priced at approximately $70 each at Asos.com.

NECA 25 Greatest Celebrity Guest Stars Figures

For diehard fans, the release of new figures from the National Entertainment Collectibles Association is always an event. Over the course of 2014, NECA has released 25 figures of the most memorable celebrity guest stars seen over the show's 25-year history. Collectors can now place yellow versions of Weird Al, Yao Ming, Tom Hanks and Britney Spears on their shelves next to the residents of Springfield. The figures are available for $15 to $20 each.



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More to Miami than South Beach

Travel time. Known as a seaside playground, with ultra-chic hot-spots and sizzling beaches

VAWN HIMMELSBACH
For Metro

Miami is still synonymous with fun and sun. While there's plenty of that, the city also boasts much more. GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Downtown Miami: It's probably the only place in the U.S. where a man can get away with wearing a white blazer. GREATER MIAMI CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Miami Temptations

- The Miami Temptations program showcases a unique Miami experience each month, offering discounts and deals for visitors. In August, for example, Miami Spice offers deals on three-course meals by world-renowned chefs, showcasing the best of Miami cuisine.

While Miami is still synonymous with "fun and sun," it's also evolved into a more cosmopolitan destination over the past five years, with an emphasis on art and culture.

"We've always had the excitement of South Beach and the waterfront cafés, but downtown Miami has become another great destination," said Rolando Aedo, CMO and EVP with the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau.

A few years ago, that was unheard of; the downtown core would empty out after the workday. Now it's enjoying a renaissance, where you'll see residents with baby strollers walking their dogs alongside some of the city's best new restaurants, shops and museums. Downtown Miami's Museum Park, for example, houses the new Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM), designed by Herzog & de Meuron (the same architects that designed Beijing's Bird's Nest Stadium).

Just north of the downtown core is the Wynwood Arts District, the epicentre of Miami's creative community. Neglected warehouses and shuttered factories have been transformed into art galleries, performing arts spaces, antique shops and eclectic bars, and the area features one of the largest open-air street art installations in the world.

"Practically every building has a mural by a street artist," said Aedo. "They're being commissioned by (building owners) to wrap buildings in amazing street art."

These neighbourhoods — as well as Miami's heritage neighbourhoods, such as Little Havana and Little Haiti — have become destinations unto themselves, he said.

In Little Havana, visitors can stroll the sidewalks, have a shot of high-octane Cuban coffee and watch grumpy old men playing dominos. "It's a truly authentic, organic experience," said Aedo. And Little Haiti — which offers art galleries, ethnic food and indie music — is a burgeoning centre for small independent businesses.

The city has also been investing in infrastructure that makes it easier for visitors to get around. It spent $8 billion to modernize its airport, which offers direct rail access to downtown Miami in 15 minutes, with free trolley and metro transit around the city.

Miami currently has about 45,000 hotel rooms and is adding an additional 8,000 rooms over the next five years. The Thompson Miami Beach — where art deco meets modern Miami — recently opened its doors, and Hong Kong's EAST brand is set to open its first U.S. property in Miami's downtown financial district in 2015.

But a visit to Miami would be remiss without taking in its iconic, art-deco hotels along South Beach. Back in the '80s, these buildings sat empty and dilapidated. "We can trace our success (in the tourism industry) to the saving and restoration of those art-deco hotels," said Aedo.

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Snow much more than skiing

Winter wonderlands. Alpine sports are the big draw at many of these resorts, but they also do a good job of entertaining the chalet dwellers

While skiers are hitting the slopes, non-skiers can soak in the mineral pool at The Fairmont Banff Springs. AFP FILE

It may seem that skiers hold a monopoly over winter. But luxury ski resorts are increasingly recognizing that winter doesn't only belong to snow bunnies by launching innovative new activities — think snow paragliding and igloo building — for their non-skiing guests.

For couples who have a hard time reconciling one person's ski needs and the other person's aversion to frozen toes and broken limbs, online booking site Trivago has curated a list of some of the most luxurious hotels that double as wintry fairylands.

The Omni Homestead, Hot Springs, Va.

While your partner heads out to carve snow, take a soak in the outdoor, adult-only hot springs at The Omni Homestead tucked into the Allegheny Mountains. The property, which has hosted 22 U.S. presidents, sits on the largest private hot springs in Virginia. Once you're sufficiently warm and toasty, head over to the on-site movie theatre. Other activities include ice skating, snow tubing, and snowmobile tours.

Les Airelles, Courchevel, France

Famed for its world-class skiing, the village of Courchevel 1850 is part of Les Trois Vallées, the largest ski area in the world. At Hotel de Charme Les Airelles, adventure seekers can explore the area by horse, snowmobile, snowshoe, or even helicopter. Gastronomes can look forward to Michelin-grade fare at Pierre Gagnaire for Les Airelles.

The Fairmont Banff Springs, Banff, Alta.

It's called Canada's 'Castle in the Rockies,' for good reason. Guests have a slew of winter sports activities to choose from at the stunning, 19th-century property, including canyon ice walking, dog sledding, ice fishing, and the very Canadian sport of curling. Thaw out at Banff's hot springs or at the hotel's mineral pool.

The Cambrian, Adelboden, Switzerland

This one's for the design hound who values the importance of esthetics. Contemporary and minimal in design with cowhide accents and luxury furnishings from B&B Italia, Porada and Knoll International, all rooms are equipped with a flat-screen TV, DVD player and Wi-Fi. Non-ski activities include snow tubing, winter hiking, igloo building, ice climbing, night sledding, and even snow paragliding.

The St. Regis Aspen Resort boasts the best spa in the world, as named by Travel + Leisure magazine. AFP FILE

St. Regis Aspen Resort, Aspen, Colo.

One of St. Regis's biggest non-ski assets is its Remede Spa, which holds the distinction of being named best spa in the world by Travel + Leisure magazine. After a tiring day on the slopes or snowshoes, guests can try out their innovative new treatment, the Farm-to-Massage-Table, an interesting twist on the gastronomic farm-to-table trend. The concept uses locally sourced and natural ingredients in its treatment.

Cristallo Spa & Golf, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy

About two hours from Venice, in the Dolomites mountain range, sits the Cristallo Spa and Golf, a luxury resort that's also renowned for its world-class spa that includes everything from anti-jet lag facial treatments and Lomi Lomi massage, characterized by slow, winding movements that evoke the rippling of waves for long-lasting relaxation. The hotel is near the Olympic bobsleigh track for non-skiing thrill-seekers.

Montage Deer Valley, Park City, Utah

Montage Deer Valley only opened in 2010 but has already amassed a string of accolades from travel publications like Condé Nast Traveler and Travel + Leisure in categories like best hotel, spa and resort. This winter season, activities include cross-country ski, snowshoeing, tubing, ice-skating, snowmobiling, dog sledding, fly fishing and train rides. Guests can also visit nearby Utah Olympic Park to watch top athletes train in Nordic jumping, bobsled, luge and skeleton. AFP

Four Seasons, Whistler B.C.

As the largest ski resort in North America, the Four Seasons Whistler has earned itself a solid reputation among ski bunnies. But aside from skiing and snowboarding, the luxury resort offers another activity that's not exactly synonymous with winter: golf. On the 18th green, putters will be met with a PGA pro, board a private helicopter to fly 8,000 feet (2,438 metres), and undertake a glacier tee-off from the 19th hole. With tips from your personal PGA golf coach, participants get set to make their longest drive and slam their biodegradable golf ball into the abyss of the wintry Canadian mountain range.

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These aren't mom's breakfast pancakes

This recipe makes 32 blinis. EMILY RICHARDS

Smoked Salmon Served on Buckwheat Blinis. Impress guests with an appetizer that offers various textures

DINNER EXPRESS
Emily Richards
food@metronews.ca

Entertaining this holiday season will be super easy if you have a few great recipes to keep on hand — like these Blinis.

When planning a get-together make sure that you are not alone in preparing some fun food. Switch things up by making the dishes with your friends and enjoying the company.

Digging into tasty morsels with a great glass of wine, cocktail or bubbly will be even more enjoyable if you've bonded over making them.

These tender little pancakes are topped with lemon cream cheese and smoked salmon. They are a perfect nibble for a night in with friends.

Ingredients

- 2 tsp (10 ml) traditional active dry yeast
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) lukewarm water
- 1 3/4 cup (425 mL) lukewarm buttermilk
- 1 cup (250 ml) all purpose flour
- 1 cup (250 ml) buckwheat flour
- 1 tsp (5 ml) salt
- 2 eggs, separated
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) butter, melted
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) cream cheese, softened
- 1 1/2 tsp (7 ml) grated lemon rind
- 1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
- 1 lb (500 g) thinly sliced smoked salmon
- Chopped green onions (optional)

1. In a bowl, dissolve yeast in water and stir in 1 1/4 cups (300 ml) of the buttermilk; let stand for 10 minutes or until frothy.

2. In another bowl, combine both flours and salt. Sift flour mixture into the buttermilk mixture and stir until well combined. Stir in remaining buttermilk.

3. Whisk egg yolks into the batter. Cover and set aside in a warm place to rise for about 1 hour or until batter is bubbly.

4. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks and fold into the batter. Cover and let rise for 1 hour.

5. Lightly brush nonstick skillet with some melted butter and heat over medium high. Spoon 1 tbsp (15 ml) of the batter for each blini and cook for about 1 minute, until bubbles break through. Turn blini over and brown for another 30 seconds. Remove from pan, and place on a plate so they do not get soggy; repeat with remaining batter.

6. In a small bowl, combine cream cheese, lemon rind and juice. Spread some of the cream cheese mixture onto the blinis. Roll sliced salmon around your finger to create a rosette and place on blini. Sprinkle with green onions to serve if desired.

Manage your goals during the holidays

Career. 'Tis the season for stressful, stacked-up schedules. Here's how to figure it all out while still feeling festive

CELINE TARRANT
TalentEgg.ca

It's better to do the important things very well than try to take on everything at once. It will speak volumes about you as a professional if you can effectively prioritize. ISTOCK

On the heels of Halloween and Thanksgiving, December brings with it the busiest time of year for most people.

Along with an already hectic work schedule, you now have holiday parties, a never-ending list of gifts to buy, holiday traffic to beat and travel plans — and you still have to deliver on every deadline.

It's easy to let work get sidelined and pushed off until things calm down. Good time management is critical to make sure you can follow through on all your commitments, while still enjoying the holidays.

Here's how you can effectively manage your professional goals during the busy holiday season, and set yourself up for success in the New Year.

For the love of lists

Scheduling every detail of your life may seem cumbersome, but seeing how you plan to spend all your time is an extremely powerful tool, and will help you figure out how you can fit everything in.

Make a list, and check it twice

If there was ever a time to truly embrace the to-do list, this is definitely it. Whether you use your Outlook calendar, an app, or pen and paper, commit to writing down every single obligation.

In addition to meetings and project deadlines, block out short chunks of uninterrupted work time where you don't check email or answer calls (when possible). Distraction-free work time does not exist during this busy time of year — unless you make it for yourself.

Include things that you might not usually put on your to-do list like shopping, parties, gym time, holiday baking, meal-prep, travel plans, and even when you plan to wake up and go to bed.

Scheduling every detail of your life may seem cumbersome, but seeing how you plan to spend all your time is an extremely powerful tool, and will help you figure out how you can fit everything in.

Or maybe it will reveal where you are needlessly wasting precious time each day. As you complete each task, indulge in the satisfaction of crossing it off your list. These are small wins to be savoured every day.

Prioritize, prioritize, prioritize

After making such a detailed to-do list, it's tempting to try to power through it as fast as possible and get everything done, but this often results in burnout or a series of half-done jobs that need to be reworked in the New Year.

Be honest with yourself about what items are critical and which are not.

Get what you need from others

Business continuity is often a challenge during the holidays, with people on vacation or out sick.

You're more likely to get an out-of-office email than an actual response, so it can seem impossible to move projects forward or get any real work done.

The last thing you want is to miss an important deadline because you forgot to collect a key piece of work from someone who just went on vacation.

Make sure you know what deliverables you need to progress your work, and follow up with people.

Keep track of your team's and boss' vacation time so you schedule important meetings before they leave, and establish a contingency plan if something goes wrong.

Extend the same courtesy to others. Your boss may have approved your vacation, but gently reminding them is always a good idea so they aren't blindsided when you don't show up for two weeks.

Be realistic — know when to say 'no'

It's important to be realistic with yourself about how much you can get done.

- Despite your best intentions to be a productivity master during this busy season, everyone has limits.
- Take the time to really prioritize rather than just try to get as much done as possible.
- Pick your professional and social obligations carefully, and don't overcommit yourself. If you set the right priorities for yourself and stick to your to-do list, you can manage your professional goals during the holidays, and have a little fun, too.

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Get ready for gift-giving

Career. The time for buying professional presents is nigh, but what on Earth will you be purchasing?

RIANA TOPAN
TalentEgg.ca

Don't play favourites — especially if you're a manager. If you're considering getting gifts, make sure you get everyone on your team a little something. ISTOCK

Although it's wonderful to exchange gifts during the holidays, the process can also be stressful. This is especially true if you aren't sure about the protocol for gift-giving at work.

The nature of your interactions will dictate what kind of gift it's appropriate for you to give.

If your co-worker is someone you also consider a friend, or if you have a relationship with them outside of work, the gift you choose should be more personal.

If you have a strictly professional relationship with a colleague, you should choose an item that is more generic. If you don't know someone very well, opt for something the recipient can use at work like a calendar or fancy pen set.

Here is a list of dos and don'ts to help you choose appropriate gifts for your co-workers, boss, clients or employees.

Do include a card

- Use a card to express your gratitude for a co-worker's help, an employee's above-and-beyond performance, or a boss's mentorship over the past year. Chances are your words of appreciation will mean just as much as — if not more than — the gift you picked out.

Do remember the spirit of gift-giving
Remember that workplace gifts are generally meant to be tokens of appreciation, so keep things simple and relatively inexpensive.

Don't choose gifts that are overly expensive
They can make other people in your office uncomfortable, make it look like you're trying to buy your way into someone's good books, or make the recipient feel like they have to reciprocate at the same level.

Do review your office rules
Make sure you're not breaking any HR policies with your gift. If you're not sure about your gift, go with something else. Better safe than sorry.

Don't make a show
If your company hasn't organized a gift exchange and you've only got presents for some of the people you work with, exchange them discreetly to prevent others from feeling left out.

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10 reasons to give

Easy and accurate, you can't go wrong with cards

With just a few weeks left before Christmas, it's time to get serious about finishing your gift shopping. Have you considered getting friends or family members a gift card? While some people think they're a bit of a cop out, here are 10 reasons why Santa probably wraps up gift cards, too.

1. EASY TO BUY. If you don't enjoy shopping, buying a gift card online or from a store is simple and straightforward.

2. TIME IS RUNNING OUT. Gift cards are faster to buy than traditional gifts, according to a recent National Retail Council survey. According to Ottawa University student Kieran McKinnon: "In the super-stressful holiday season sometimes it becomes necessary to go for an approximation of what someone might like, rather than the actual thing."

3. ALL ABOUT THE RECIPIENT. Gift cards put the selection of gifts completely into the hands of the recipient. Says McKinnon: "Receiving a gift card gives someone the chance to choose exactly what they would like for Christmas." According to the NRC survey, more than half of us buy gift cards for this reason.

THE 3 GIFT CARDS

- **Anywhere card:** A gift card from Visa or MasterCard, for example, can be used wherever that credit card is accepted.
- **Somewhat limited:** This card can be used at a limited number of merchants —a mall gift card is a good example.
- **One shop:** The card can be used at the one store but at any location.

4. A PERFECT SOLUTION. If you know someone who has everything, a gift card is perfect.

5. A SPECIAL GIFT. The person who receives a gift card has to buy something — and maybe something really special. Says Centennial College student Kelly-Celina Batris: "I like getting a gift card because it lets me buy things for myself that I might not have otherwise."

SHUTTERSTOCK

6. GOOD ON YOU. Provided you think about which card to give and it's appropriate, giving a gift card shows you put some effort into the gift.

7. PORTABILITY. A gift card is easy to send to friends or family who live a long ways away.

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The Canadiens' Tomas Plekanec scores on Canucks goalie Ryan Miller on Tuesday night in Montreal. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canucks cap road trip with loss in Montreal

NHL. Plekanec scores game-winner for Habs on night in which Béliveau was honoured

Tomas Plekanec scored the winner late in the third period to lead the Montreal Canadiens to a 3-1 victory over the visiting Vancouver Canucks on Tuesday.

Brendan Gallagher also scored for Montreal (18-10-2), while Max Pacioretty added an empty-net goal at 19:59 of the third.

On Tuesday

Canadiens	Canucks
3	1

Carey Price stopped 15 shots.

Derek Dorsett was the lone goal scorer for Vancouver (18-9-2). Ryan Miller made 21 saves in defeat.

The game marked the end of a seven-game road trip that had the Canucks go 3-3-1.

Meanwhile, the Canadiens, who ended a three-game skid, are now 15-1-1 when tied or leading after two periods.

Plekanec scored the game-winner at 15:44 of the final frame after tipping a beautiful pass from youngster Sven Andrighetto into the roof of the net.

This was the second and final meeting between Montreal and Vancouver this season.

Prior to puck drop, the Canadiens honoured the late Jean Béliveau with a video tribute, moment of silence and lengthy standing ovation.

Béliveau's widow Elise Couture Béliveau wept, prayed, thrust out her arms in thanks and finally motioned for the crowd to stop.

The Canadiens great passed away last Tuesday at the age of 83.

"It was the most emotional night I've ever experienced in Montreal," Plekanec said. "I had chills all through the ceremony."

The Canucks were also moved. "I thought it was an amazing tribute," Miller said. "For his wife … I kind of got a little choked up right there.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA

Gasol bounces back to lead Grizz past Mavericks

Marc Gasol scored 30 points, Mike Conley added 22 and the Memphis Grizzlies withstood 18 Dallas three-pointers to beat the Mavericks 114-105 on Tuesday night.

Gasol, who was limited to only two points in Sunday's win over Miami, was 9-for-14 shooting from the field and 12 of 13 from the line as Memphis won its second straight. Zach Randolph finished with 17 points and 13 rebounds, while Tony Allen scored 13 points.

Chandler Parsons led the Mavericks with 30 points, going 10 of 18 from the field and six of 10 from three-point range. Jameer Nelson had a season-high 18 points, while J.J. Barea finished with a season-best 17, including 12 in the fourth quarter as Dallas tried to rally. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

White Sox add two big arms

The Chicago White Sox are making the biggest moves at the winter meetings, trying to regain relevance in the AL Central.

Hours after reaching a four-year, $46-million deal with closer David Robertson, Chicago acquired starting pitcher Jeff Samardzija from the Oakland Athletics as part of a six-player trade.

In Tuesday's other big swap, Arizona sent all-star catcher Miguel Montero to the Chicago Cubs for a pair of prospects.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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VANCOUVER GIANTS

Liverpool eliminated at home

Martin Skrtel bends downs as Basel players celebrate in Liverpool, England, after eliminating the Reds from the Champions League. Scan the photo with your Metro News app for more action around Europe on Tuesday. PAUL ELLIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Turf war

Alleged reprisals by FIFA added to players' case

Players opposing the use of artificial turf at next year's Women's World Cup won a partial victory Tuesday when the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario allowed them to amend their legal complaint to include allegations of reprisals against the women behind the claim.

But while noting such allegations of reprisals strike at the heart of the tribunal's process for enforcing human rights, vice-chair Jo-Anne Pickel rejected the players' request for a cease and desist order.

The players allege that Mexican international Teresa Noyola and French internationals Camille Abily and Elise Bussaglia had been threatened with reprisals.

All three have withdrawn from the complaint.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Panthers' Cam Newton injured in car crash

Panthers quarterback Cam Newton suffered fractures to his lower back in a two-car crash Tuesday and was expected to spend the night in a hospital, a team spokesman said Tuesday.

Newton was in fair condition, had no other internal injuries and would not need surgery, team spokesman Charlie Dayton said during a news conference outside a Charlotte hospital. It was unclear if Newton would be able to practise or play Sunday against the Buccaneers, Dayton said.

"Right now we have thought about Cam's well-being and we understand there was someone else in the other car who was injured," Dayton said. "We just hope that they're all OK." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

McKinstry looks up to Kings' Doughty

Hockey inspiration. Giants prodigy calls L.A. defenceman 'phenomenal'

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Ryely McKinstry thinks the world of Drew Doughty the hockey player, the elite L.A. Kings defenceman who can make the game look so easy at times.

"He's just … I just think he's phenomenal. He's one of the best, if not the best defenceman in the league," said McKinstry, the 16-year-old Vancouver Giants blue-liner, in an interview earlier in the WHL season.

The smooth-skating ability; the calming influence he can have in situations of speed and chaos by moving the puck efficiently to his teammates; the courage to engage opponents in physical battles and the danger of being an offensive threat: All things Doughty brings to the defending Stanley Cup champion Kings.

Understandably, McKinstry would like to pattern his game after Doughty's, but admitted that's easier said than done.

"When he's out there, I always try to watch him personally: See what he does, see his habits and try to … put them into my own game," he said.

The Giants selected McKinstry in the second round of the 2013 Bantam Draft, the same year the club took Tyler Benson first overall and Burnaby Winter Club product Matt Barberis late in the first round at 20th overall.

"I think he's going to be one of those guys who plays huge minutes for our team. He's going to be as influential as Tyler Benson in many ways," said Giants general manager Scott Bonner of McKinstry.

"He might be the smartest guy on the team … his hockey IQ is really strong."

The injury bug has since reared its ugly head. McKinstry missed eight games in November with an upper-body injury, returned for one game against Portland on Dec. 5, and is now day-to-day with a lower-body injury.

Given his age and how much management values him as part of their plans for the future, it's understandable why the Giants are taking a precautionary approach with McKinstry.

"We're … building around that age group and we're not going to damage their future for a game here or there," said Bonner.

Vancouver Giants defenceman Ryely McKinstry. CAM TUCKER/METRO

Respect

"He's one of the best, if not the best defenceman in the league."

Giants defenceman Ryely McKinstry on L.A. Kings defenceman Drew Doughty

Looking for four

Raiders visit Vancouver

The Giants will look to make it four wins in a row when they host the Prince Albert Raiders at the Pacific Coliseum on Wednesday.

They are 2-0 under Claude Noel, who was introduced as the club's new head coach last week.

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2015 Subaru Legacy

- **Type.** Four-door, AWD midsize sedan
- **Engines.** 2.5-litre flat four (175 hp), 3.6-litre flat six (256)
- **Transmission.** Manual six-speed, automatic CVT
- **Price.** $25,090 base, $26,390 as tested

Market position

Competitor to mainstream sedans, but with the Subaru differentiators of AWD and horizontally opposed engine designs (a.k.a. flat or boxer). Traditionally appealed to slightly cultish customers willing to pay a premium for AWD and non-flashy looks. Subaru is now trying to make Legacy appeal to a larger customer base.

Points

- Legacy just named Best New Family Car Under $30,000 by the Automotive Journalists Association of Canada.
- Same footprint as previous model, with the same engines, but increased space and fuel economy, aided by new aerodynamic styling, electric power steering, and active front grille shutters.
- The only vehicle in its class with standard full-time AWD.

The new cabin is roomy — front and back — and much quieter.

Safety features

- Optional EyeSight system includes adaptive cruise control, pre-collision braking and throttle control, and lane sway and departure warning.
- AWD system can apply brake pressure to assist handling on corners.
- Optional steering-responsive fog lights, and rear/side vehicle detection system.

Less quirky, more appealing

PHOTOS: MIKE GOETZ

Review. Subaru Legacy is now refined, roomy and quiet, trading its former niche status for a mainstream audience

MIKE GOETZ
drive@metronews.ca

Nobody in the automotive world works a niche better than Subaru. Stuff all-wheel drive and a boxer engine into any vehicle format and presto! You've got yourself a Subaru, and a smallish but dedicated group of customers who will gladly partake, because they like being different, and they really like AWD.

But living in a niche can wear on you. They're small and cramped, and with poor ventilation and soundproofing — you can hear the crowds in the bigger suites laughing it up all hours in the morning.

So Subaru did the only sensible thing when it came time to overhaul the Legacy sedan for 2015. It angled it more toward the sweet spot of the midsize sedan market, where huge crowds of North American buyers shop. The result is great midsize sedan, which looks and feels like more like the new Camry than the previous Legacy.

In fact, a Legacy 2.5i model was just named AJAC's Best New Family Car Under $30,000, a category that included the new Toyota Camry and the new Chrysler 200. Those two were the match of Legacy in pretty much every category, except safety. Some of Legacy's high safety score was achieved by the optional Eyesight package, which includes adaptive cruise control and pre-collision braking and throttle control.

My base 2.5i tester didn't have those features, but did include a rear-view camera, cushion airbags and a standard AWD system that can apply brake pressure to the inside front wheel to assist cornering.

The Legacy's interior decor and features now match anything in its class.

Subaru was known for not sweating the interior decor and features as much as their powertrain and AWD systems, but the Legacy's new cabin matches anything in its class. The new interface with a 6.2-inch touchscreen is not too complicated, and includes knobs and buttons for major functions. The (finally) up-to-date audio system offers satellite radio, auxiliary input, steering-wheel controls, and Bluetooth for smartphones and streaming audio. Nice.

The cabin is also roomy — front and back — and offers a level of quiet not previously associated with Subaru. Liquid-filled engine mounts, an acoustic windshield, lots of sound insulation, and a more aerodynamic body shape all contribute to the increased serenity.

That body shape is a bit generic to these eyes, and not one that will stand out in a crowded parking lot. All part of that plan to blend in more, I guess.

The 175-hp engine and CVT offer up no surprises, just thoroughly civilized propulsion entirely in keeping with the expectations of this mainstream segment. In combination with the new electric steering, which is precise but feels somewhat disconnected from the road, you have a laid-back but sorted-out driving experience that should appeal to easygoing drivers and their families.

The Legacy is much closer to its rivals than ever before, which is good for Subaru and good for lots of buyers, but maybe just a tiny bit sad for those of us who don't want diversification and quirkiness to completely disappear.

Compare

1 Ford Fusion SE AWD
Base price: $31,399
Only other midsize AWD sedan not from a premium brand.

2 Toyota Camry
Base price:$25,370
Dependable and comfy, now with a bit more attitude.

3 Chrysler 200
Base price: $24,190
All-new and aggressively priced.

DRIVE

Drivers, dreamers and speed demons

For the F1 Fanatic: Canadian Grand Prix weekend pass

Daniel Ricciardo started sixth on the grid in this year's edition of Montreal's most pulse-pounding weekend. The Australian took the first checkered flag of his F1 career after slipping past Sergio Pérez and Nico Rosberg in the closing laps.

For $633, you can watch Ricciardo defend his title next June, with a weekend pass to the optimum sightlines afforded by Grandstand 1, or opt for the $577 Pole Position Package for diâfferent vantage points during the practice and qualifying sessions, before settling back into Grandstand 1 on race day.

For details, go to grandprixmontreal.com.

Gift guide. Lusting for a Lambo but budgeted for a bicycle? We can help

MIKE DOJC
drive@metronews.ca

Car peeps are generally an easy group to shop for. In a pinch, plunk a few Armor All products into a basket, toss in a tool set, add a bow, and park that bad boy under the tree.

But here are some hints for those who want to go the extra mile and fine-tune their gifts to the various whims of the auto-obsessive.

Assuming you can't afford this bright orange, gull-winged Lamborghini Aventador — which would look good in anyone's driveway, but starts at $485,000 — here are some more affordable suggestions for those on your list who think four wheels are way better than two.

For the Toy Tinkerer: LEGO DeLorean Time Machine

Revisit those halcyon days when you were young and naive enough to believe a futuristic-looking car that blazed to 88 mph could bend the fabric of the space-time continuum. The automotive star of Back to the Future has been shrunken into a five-inch, 401-piece Lego kit ($45), all decked out with foldable wheels, gull-wing doors that open and shut, and, of course, a flux capacitor. It even comes with mini figures of Marty McFly and Doc.

For the Lambo Lover: Lamborghini: 100 Years of Innovation in Half the Time

Ferruccio Lamborghini's low-slung, high-powered dream machines have left motorists weak-kneed ever since the 350GT roared to life in the early 1960s. The alluring marque kept it coming with icon after icon. This coffee table book ($75) chronicles the sinuous journey with more than 200 spectacular photos detailing every model the raging bull badge has produced.

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JIL MCINTOSH
drive@metronews.ca

Topping up the engine oil is easy, but overfilling it can be almost as harmful as having too little oil. CONTRIBUTED

Just as your body needs fluids to stay healthy, so does your car. Gasoline may seem to be the most important one, but there are some that are just as vital to the car's health, and others that can help with your safety.

"Make sure when you're getting your car prepped for winter that you've topped up your fluids," says Kevin McNamara, category business manager of automotive fluids for Canadian Tire. "Even when it's cold outside, your engine can overheat if fluids aren't moving through it."

Oil is vital to your car's health, since it lubricates the moving parts inside the engine and also helps dissipate some of the excess heat it creates. Without oil, an engine could be irreparably damaged in less than a minute.

The oil should be changed and the oil filter replaced at the intervals recommended by the auto manufacturer.

In between changes, it's a good idea to occasionally check the oil level, especially on an older car. Top it up if necessary, but don't overfill it, since too much oil can also be harmful.

Synthetic oil is a good (if initially more expensive) choice, not just because it lasts longer and needs to be changed less often, but also because its microscopic particles are more uniform and can do a better job of lubrication than conventional oil.

Engine coolant is commonly known as anti-freeze because its freezing point is well below that of plain water. It absorbs heat from the engine and then flows into the radiator, where it is cooled and sent back out to the engine in a continuous loop.

This fluid should be checked at least twice a year with a coolant tester to be sure it's still able to withstand cold temperatures. A technician can do this for you, but if you do it yourself, check it only from the coolant reservoir, never by opening the radiator cap.

You should always carry a spare jug of washer fluid and keep the reservoir filled, especially if you do a lot of highway driving, where it can be dangerous to pull over and fill it. You can go through it quickly when other vehicles splash salt up from the road, which quickly dries to an opaque crust. All washer fluid will clean away the grime, but look for all-season or winter-specific options.

"Use fluid with a temperature rating for your province," McNamara says. "If you use summer fluid, it could freeze in the reservoir and potentially damage it."

Fluid facts

- If your locks freeze, use lock de-icer; never warm water. Always keep the de-icer bottle with you, not stored in the glovebox.
- A car's "curb weight" is the weight of the vehicle plus all of its fluids, including a full tank of fuel.
- Other fluids your car may contain include transmission oil, power steering fluid, differential oil, brake fluid, and battery electrolyte.

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2014 IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK+††
Get up to a $5,000 cash discount** or 0% APR for 48 months‡ on other 2014 models.
**On 2014 CC models
Das Auto.
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*Bi-weekly equivalent lease payments of $81 on the Jetta shown for example purposes only. Actual lease payments start at $175 and must be made monthly, not bi-weekly. $1,000 in credits available on 2015 Jetta gas models (excluding GLI model) to be applied to first two monthly lease payments. Limited time lease offer available through Volkswagen Finance, on approved credit, based on a new and unregistered 2015 Jetta 2.0L base model with 5-speed manual transmission and base MSRP of $16,385. $1,395 freight and PDI included. 48-month term at 1.9% APR. $0 down payment, $230 security deposit and first monthly payment in excess of payment credits (if applicable) due at lease inception. Total lease obligation: $8,400. 64,000-kilometre allowance; charge of $0.15/km for excess kilometres. PPSA fee, license, insurance, registration, any dealer or other charges, options and applicable taxes are extra. **Limited time discount on cash purchase only of select new and unregistered 2014 models remaining in dealer inventory. Example: $5,000 cash discount on the MSRP available on the 2014 CC 2.0T Highline with 6-speed manual transmission. Discount varies by model. †2015 Volkswagen Jetta 4 DR FWD received a 5-star overall rating. Government star ratings are part of the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) New Car Assessment Program (safercar.gov). Crash performance was based on a U.S.-equipped vehicle. Some features on that model may be optional or not available in Canada. ††The 2015 Jetta was awarded a Top Safety Pick+ from the IIHS (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety). To qualify for a Top Safety Pick+, a vehicle must earn good ratings in the moderate overlap front, side, roof strength and head restraint tests, as well as a good or acceptable rating in the small overlap front test and earn a basic, advanced or superior rating for front-crash prevention. ‡Limited time finance purchase offer available through Volkswagen Finance, on approved credit on select new and unregistered 2014 models remaining in dealer inventory, financed at 0% APR for 48 months equals 104 bi-weekly payments. Example: Base MSRP of $24,970 for a new and unregistered 2014 Golf Wagon 2.5L base model with 5-speed manual transmission, financed at 0% APR for 48 months, equals $298 per month, including $1,395 freight and PDI. Down payment or equivalent trade-in, due at signing, may be required. Cost of borrowing is $0 for a total obligation of $24,970. PPSA fee, license, insurance, registration, any dealer or other charges, options and applicable taxes are extra. Dealer may sell or lease for less. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Offers end January 2, 2015 and are subject to change or cancellation without notice. Model shown: 2015 Jetta 1.8T Highline, $25,990. Vehicle may not be exactly as shown. Visit vw.ca or your Volkswagen dealer for details. "Volkswagen", the Volkswagen logo, "Das Auto & Design", "Jetta" and "CC" are registered trademarks of Volkswagen AG. © 2014 Volkswagen Canada.

AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
If you dream about moving up in the world there is a chance that it might happen this week. At the very least you will lay the foundations for future success.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
The restrictions you have been labouring under in recent days will fade over the next 24 hours. Your attitude will be more positive too, giving you a greater sense of freedom.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Stick to the facts today, especially when dealing with money. If you are tempted to make a decision for sentimental reasons it could easily backfire.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Today you will find it easier to be more outgoing and sociable and that's good because you have been a bit too self-obsessed of late. You're allowed to have fun — and look for love.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You have many good ideas but how many will amount to anything? If you are not sure which ones have selling potential ask someone who is likely to know.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
All things are possible for you now, Virgo, so set your sights high and don't stop until you have reached your goal. You will be amazed how easily things come to you.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Cosmic activity in one of the more sensitive areas of your chart could make you more emotional than usual but maybe that's no bad thing.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
What you say today will have far-reaching effects for months to come, so think before you speak and strive to be positive.

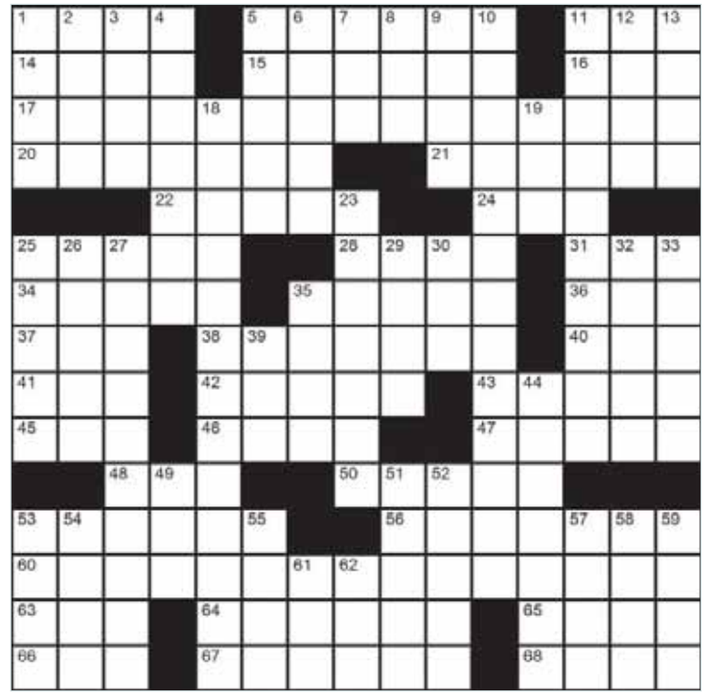
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Turn your attention to financial matters. You may have spent a lot recently and with values planet Venus moving into the money area of your chart you must find ways to save.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
The entry of love planet Venus into your sign today means you can expect good news concerning a long-term relationship. Difficulties will ease over the next few days.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
For someone who is confident you seem thin-skinned right now. Could it be because you realize that criticisms being leveled at you are true? Why not just admit you were wrong?

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Put your worries behind you and have fun with your friends. Some will say you're neglecting your responsibilities but you can ignore them. You need to take a break.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



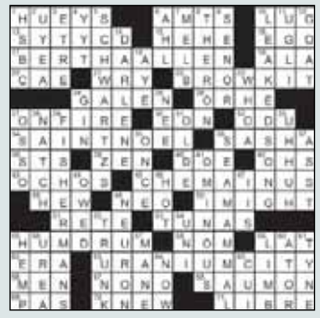
Across

1. Bugs Bunny's foe Elmer
5. Duty
11. Neil Young's "Old __"
14. "Dies __": Latin hymn
15. Shots __ __ (Hockey statistics)
16. Rock-__ (Classic jukebox company)
17. "__-__ __": Tragically Hip tune with the line "I stole this from a hockey card..."
20. Bruce Springsteen & The _ __ Band
21. First season player
22. Assumed name
24. Nero's 511
25. Language of Sri Lanka
28. VIP's vehicle
31. Sports org.
34. John Hersey's bell town
35. Rice dish
36. "Gosh."
37. Marcel Marceau's clown
38. Demolishing one
40. Zippy dance
41. Tubular fish
42. Cloistered chaps
43. #41-Across ...in sushi bars
45. Regret
46. __ Reader (Alternative press magazine)
47. Charles of "Gaslight" (1944)
48. French possessive
50. Little Richard's "__ __ Up"
53. Certain chambers
56. Feminist Gloria
60. Canadian painter from Montreal (b.1906 - d.1993) ...her works include Harbour and Milkweed: 3 wds.
63. Sisqo's group, __ Hill
64. Lemon juicer
65. Cupid's Greek counterpart
66. Drake's music
67. Vintage model for Chrysler
68. Gus Van __ (Director)

Down

1. __ and drum (Marching band duo)
2. Mr. Geller's
3. Music duo, __ Punk
4. Get off the choo-choo
5. Moviedom's Marisa
6. Ms. Ekberg
7. "Pretty Woman" (1990) actor ...his initials-sharers
8. Cyclades island
9. Impartial
10. As per #11-Down... bit of Lorde's song "Yellow Flicker Beat": "My blood is a __ __ __, precious stones..."
11. "The Hunger Games: __ - Part 1" (2014)
12. Jai __
13. Scruff
18. Product by American food brand French's: 2 wds.
19. Night: Latin
23. More glossy
25. Southern Alberta town
26. "Bon voyage!"
27. Quebec is the world's biggest producer of what?: 2 wds.
29. Classes
30. Ms. West
32. Neutral tone
33. Norse sea god
35. Philadelphia's puny place
39. Decay
44. Posters
49. Prefix with 'dermis'
51. Small island
52. Prefix meaning 'Feather'
53. RCN rank
54. Uncommon, in Latin
55. Snick-or-__
57. Canadian painter Ms. Collyer (b.1898 - d.1979)
58. Collar type
59. __. __. Helens, Wash.
61. Volkswagen slogan, __ Auto.
62. 'I love', in Latin

Yesterday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	3	5				2	8	
4			8		3			7
			7					9
			2					1
			4					5
		1					9	
	9					6		
8					1			
6	7	2	9		8	1	4	3

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Yesterday's Sudoku

8	2	9	7	6	4	3	5	1
4	5	7	1	2	3	8	9	6
3	1	6	9	8	5	2	4	7
5	6	2	4	9	8	1	7	3
7	8	3	2	5	1	4	6	9
9	4	1	6	3	7	5	8	2
2	7	4	8	1	9	6	3	5
6	3	8	5	7	2	9	1	4
1	9	5	3	4	6	7	2	8

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Web: skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca
Employment information for career decisions
A free service for immigrants to British Columbia
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0% PURCHASE FINANCING FOR UP TO 96 MONTHS†
ON SELECT MODELS

2015 BEST NEW FAMILY CAR (OVER $30,000)

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HWY: 7.4L/100 KM
CITY: 10.4L/100 KM▼

Sport 2.0T model shown♦

THE ALL-NEW 2015 SONATA GL

OWN IT FOR ONLY $59 WEEKLY | 0% FINANCING FOR 96 MONTHS†
SELLING PRICE: $24,444

HWY: 6.7L/100 KM
CITY: 9.7L/100 KM▼

Limited model shown♦

2015 ELANTRA L

WAS ~~$17,594~~ | NOW $12,959‡
INCLUDES $4,635 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTS^Ω

2014 Elantra "Highest Ranked Compact Car in Initial Quality in the U.S.^Δ"

HWY: 9.8L/100 KM
CITY: 12.9L/100 KM▼

Limited model shown♦

2015 SANTA FE SPORT 2.4L FWD

WAS ~~$28,694~~ | NOW $24,859‡
INCLUDES $3,835 IN PRICE ADJUSTMENTS^Ω

★★★★★ AWARDED THE HIGHEST GOVERNMENT CRASH SAFETY RATING▲
U.S. NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

5-Star Overall Crash Safety Rating▲

FINAL DAYS FOR 2014 MODELS!

HWY: 5.3L/100 KM
CITY: 7.5L/100 KM▼

GLS model shown♦

2014 ACCENT 4DR L

OWN IT FOR ONLY $33 WEEKLY | 0% FINANCING FOR 96 MONTHS†
SELLING PRICE: $12,644

2014 Accent "Highest Ranked Small Car in Initial Quality in the U.S.^Δ"

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5 YEAR WARRANTY
5-year/100,000 km Comprehensive Limited Warranty††
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®The Hyundai names, logos, product names, feature names, images and slogans are trademarks owned by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. ‡Cash price of $12,959/$24,859 available on all remaining new in stock 2015 Elantra L 6-speed Manual/Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD models. Delivery and Destination charges of $1,595/$1,795. Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, fees, levies, license fees, applicable taxes and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. Delivery and Destination charge includes freight, P.D.E. and a full tank of gas. †Finance offers available O.A.C. from Hyundai Financial Services based on a new 2014 Accent 4 Door L 6-speed manual/2015 Sonata GL Auto with an annual finance rate of 0% for 96 months. Weekly payments are $33/$59. $0 down payment required. Cost of Borrowing is $0. Finance offers include Delivery and Destination of $1,595/$1,695. Finance offers exclude exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, fees, levies, license fees, applicable taxes and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. Financing example: 2014 Accent 4 Door L 6-speed manual for $13,744 at 0% per annum equals $33 weekly for 96 months for a total obligation of $13,744. $0 down payment required. Cash price is $13,744. Cost of Borrowing is $0. Example price includes Delivery and Destination of $1,595. Example price excludes registration, insurance, PPSA, fees, levies, license fees, applicable taxes and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. ΩPrice adjustments are calculated against the vehicle's starting price. Price adjustments of up to $4,635/$3,835/$7,000 available on in stock 2015 Elantra L 6-speed manual/2015 Santa Fe Sport 2.4L FWD/2015 Genesis Coupe 3.8L GT. Price adjustments applied before taxes. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available offers. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. ♦Prices of models shown: 2015 Elantra Limited/2015 Santa Fe Sport 2.0T Limited AWD/2014 Accent 4 Door GLS Auto/2015 Sonata Sport 2.0T are $27,244/$41,444/$20,394/$32,694. Delivery and Destination charges of $1,595/$1,795/$1,595/$1,695. Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA, fees, levies, license fees, applicable taxes and dealer admin. fees of up to $499. Fees may vary by dealer. ▼Fuel consumption for new 2015 Elantra 2.0 Limited (HWY 6.7L/100KM; City 9.7L/100KM); 2015 Santa Fe Sport 2.0T Limited AWD (HWY 9.8L/100KM; City 12.9L/100KM); 2014 Accent 4-Door GLS Auto (HWY 5.3L/100KM; City 7.5L/100KM); 2015 Sonata 2.0T Ultimate (HWY 7.4L/100KM; City 10.4L/100KM); are based on Manufacturer Testing. Actual fuel efficiency may vary based on driving conditions and the addition of certain vehicle accessories. Fuel economy figures are used for comparison purposes only. ΔThe Hyundai Accent/Elantra received the lowest number of problems per 100 vehicles among small/compact cars in the proprietary J.D. Power 2014 Initial Quality Study℠ (IQS). Study based on responses from 86,118 new-vehicle owners, measuring 239 models and measures opinions after 90 days of ownership. Propriety study results are based on experiences and perceptions of owners surveyed in February-May 2014. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com. ▲Government 5-Star Safety Ratings are part of the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) New Car Assessment Program (www.SaferCar.gov). ‡†♦ΩOffers available for a limited time and subject to change or cancellation without notice. Dealer may sell for less. Inventory is limited, dealer order may be required. Visit www.hyundaicanada.com or see dealer for complete details. ††Hyundai's Comprehensive Limited Warranty coverage covers most vehicle components against defects in workmanship under normal use and maintenance conditions.